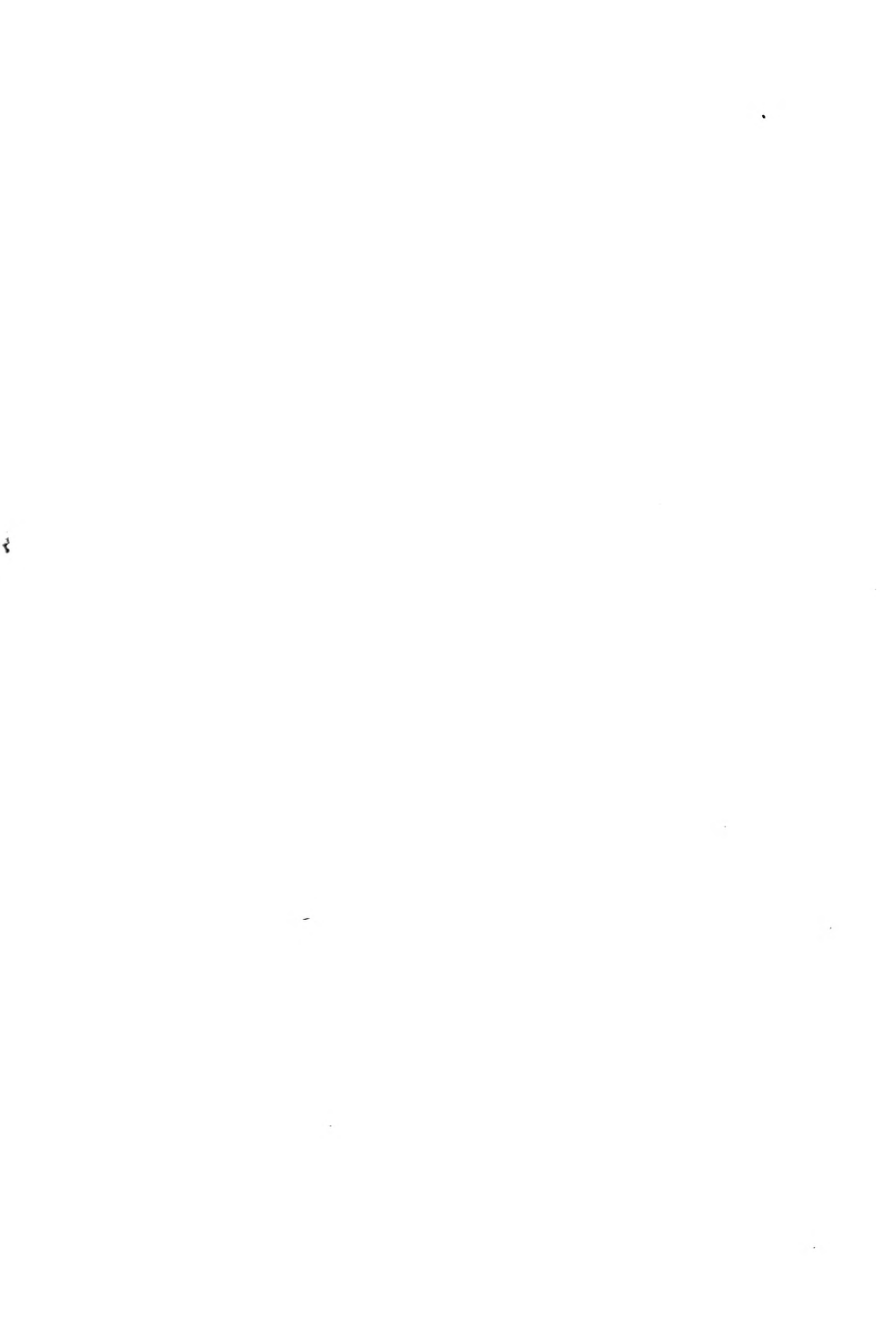


*Rits of Old Mexico*



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# Bits of Old Mexico



By JAMES A. WILSON  
San Francisco - - California



No. ....

To *Walter H Brunt*

*San Francisco*

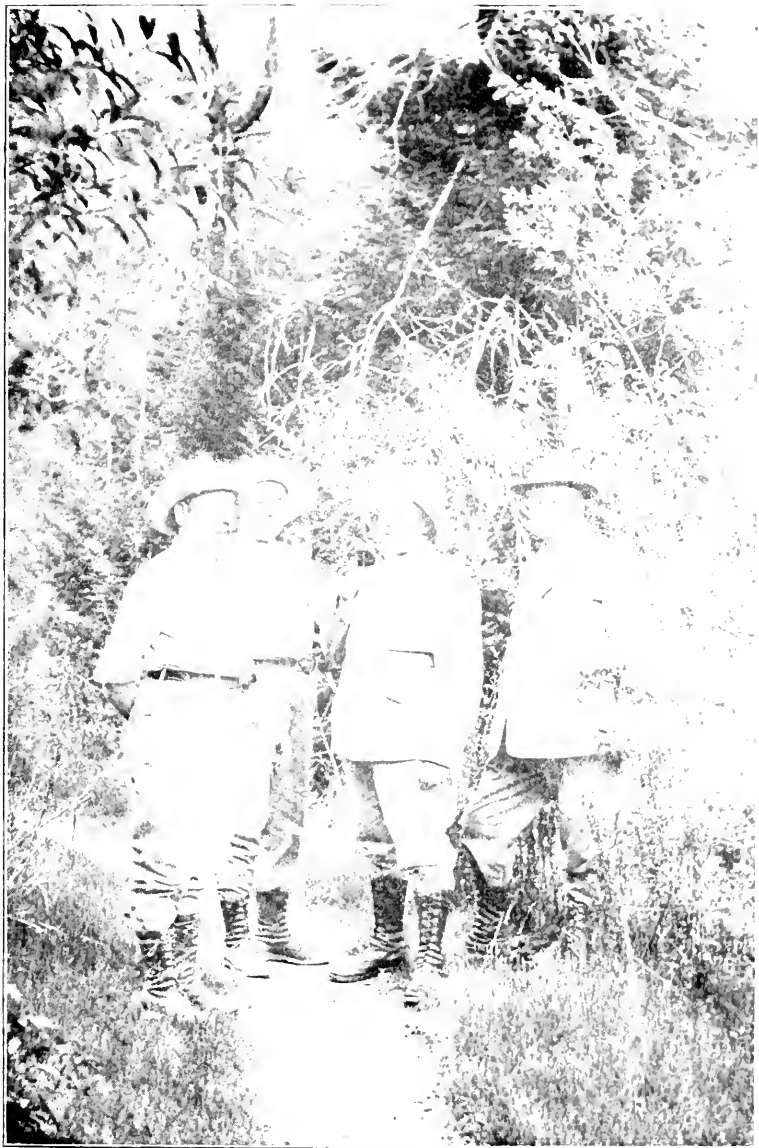
*Dec 14<sup>th</sup> 1911*

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*James A Wilson*

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*Reading from left to right—"Dick," "Billie," "Jim," "George"*



# BITS OF OLD MEXICO

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BY JAMES A. WILSON

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In a moment of absent-mindedness, I said. "Yes, I'll go." and the result of that "yes" was a trip to Mexico.

We had been discussing the rubber question and its possibilities. I had agreed to take an interest in a plantation but said Missouriian-like, "Show me," and the agreement to visit Mexico and this particular plantation was an assured fact before we left the lunch table.

It took us about a week to get ready and on the 24th of February started for the land of *manana* and the home of *quein sabe*.

The run to El Paso had its moments of interest, but as this is a trip to Mexico, I will forget everything else for the present.

Eleven a. m. Sunday, February 28th, found us on the bridge connecting El Paso and Juarez, or the United States and Mexico, and incidentally in the hands of the custom officers.

I have mentioned "us" and "we" a number of times and as we are about to enter a foreign country

the party had better be identified, so, for convenience sake, I will name them Dick, Billie, George and Jim, the latter being represented by myself at meal time and other important functions.

The day was hot and we were comfortably warm; a drawing room protected us some from the heat and didn't hurt with the inspectors.

After leaving the bridge, the train stopped at Juarez where trunks were inspected and an opportunity offered to change your money from American to Mexican at the rate of two Mexican for one American. This gives a person a sense of wealth and you wonder why people don't go to that country where they will have just twice as much as at home.

The whistle blew about noon time and we were off for the City of Mexico.

The journey was made without event. Our stops were short, the country uninviting, and the natives more so, but of this later. The engineer and our desires seemed to be as one in getting as quickly as possible to the City of Mexico, and when the colored gentleman ordered us to stand up and get "brushed down" we knew we were getting close to the beginning of our trip.

We pulled into the station promptly on time at 8 p. m. and after the usual fussing about getting baggage started right, took carriages and drove out through the gates, getting tabbed by some soldiers as we did so. They got the hotel we were going to and

the number of pieces of baggage, and, I suppose, at the end wrote down Gringos, four.

We had arranged to stop at the St. Francis, and accordingly, proceeded to get there as soon as free. A hurried wash, a bite to eat, and we were out and taking our first walk in the City of Mexico.

Leaving the hotel and turning to the left from the bronze statue of Charles IV of Spain, walking about two blocks on a wide street of residences and stores, you arrive at the Alameda or plaza. The street here is wide for about two blocks, with stores on the right. At the end of the Alameda the street narrows and becomes the Calle de San Francisco which extends to the Plaza Mayor, or main square in the center of the city from which point all cars start and all trips finish.

Standing in the square, one, in imagination, can see startling events in the history of Mexico—the coming of the Tolties in the seventh century, replacing a former race and establishing a system of government, devoting themselves to war largely, but finding sufficient time to cultivate the soil, erect great temples and cities, study science and art and gradually disappear, it is thought, through famine, pestilence and war; but their four centuries of occupation, it is suggested, left the ruins of Palenque Mitla and other wonders of building genius.

The coming and going of different tribes followed, with more or less advance in civilization, till we see the Aztecs, or Mexicans, arrive, wandering around, bossing some other tribe one day and becoming slaves

the next, so to speak, till we find a band of them wandering on the borders of a lake looking for a new camping place. One of the old leaders spied a golden eagle perched on the stem of a prickly pear with a snake, or serpent in its talons, and being tired, pronounced this a good omen, and informed his friends that this was the promised land. This happened in 1325, and they called the place Tenochtitlan. This was the beginning of the City of Mexico.

Wars with other tribes, conquests, peace and prosperity brought civilization, and they established kingdoms and royalty, pomp and ceremony of a truly pagan character. All this we see passing before the minds eye in the preparation for the coming of Cortez. We see him land and fight his way, conquering or gaining allies from Vera Cruz to the City of Mexico, which he entered on the 8th of November, 1519. We see his meeting with Montezuma, his stay and expulsion on July 1st, 1520, "la noche triste," or dismal night, his flight and reinforcement from Cuba, and his final triumphal entry into the City of Mexico, August 13th, 1521, the falling of the temples and the erection of Christian churches, the rule of the viceroys, the revolution, the empire, the republic, the Mexican war, the capture of the city by the United States' forces on the 15th of September, 1847, the treaty of peace, the entry of the French soldiers on June 9th, 1863, and the crowning of Maximilian emperor, June 12th, 1864; the United States telling Napoleon that they wouldn't stand for the king business; the Mexicans getting up another revolution,

and taking Max and a couple of his generals out and shooting them; General Diaz capturing the city June 21st, and Juarez made president of Mexico, entering the city July 25th, 1867.

We see many other scraps in different parts of Mexico—that of Oaxaca in January, 1876, when General Diaz took the field and everything else he could lay his hands on, and finally, take the city November 24th, 1876, and hold it and the office of president ever since with the exception of one term of four years.

I stood reviewing all these things mentally and was finally brought back to the present by Billie announcing that he intended going to the museum in the morning to examine the Aztec calendar. Billie is a scientist among other things. George wanted to take in the churches and cemeteries. He is serious-minded. Dick was agreeable for anything but suggested that wood-work was his long suit, and as the best samples of cabinet-work could be found in the Cantina we should look over this branch of the Mexican exhibit first. We adjourned immediately to the first we found to compare the cabinet-work in the Mexican Cantina with the bar fixtures of a California saloon.

The following morning saw us up and ready for sight-seeing. Our first visit was to the museum to satisfy Billie. We hired a guide who spoke English fluently and charged us in both languages plentifully. He took us direct to the Aztec Calendar, as per Billie's desire, and informed us that it was originally in the great temple Tenochtitlan, and after it was destroyed,

the stone was left on the ground in the square, and when the Christians built the Cathedral, it was placed in the West tower from which place it was removed to the museum in 1886. It weighed originally nearly sixty tons; that it took five thousand men to bring it from the quarry in 1478 to the city; that it showed the seasons, the months and the days. It certainly looked the age and its weight could hardly be doubted. Its carvings, strange in character, were on a round dial.

Billie examined it very critically, but seemed to think it would do. George said he thought there must be some religious significance attached to the characters on the stone that was not understood, and Dick and I took the guide's word for it. The sacrificial stone next attracted our attention. The guide informed us that it came out of the great temple that stood on this square and was companion to the calendar stone. It was about the same size, and circular, was carved all around the sides and on the flat surface of the top, had a hole cut in the center from which ran a chase which the guide told us was for the burning of the hearts and carrying off the blood of the victims. This stone was found near the Cathedral in 1791, and was about to be broken up because it could not be moved conveniently, when some one thought to save it as a curio.

A colossal head of stone was next pointed out. It was dug up from one of the streets in 1830. It is three feet high and two feet through the neck, and is supposed to be as old as the Calendar stone. It looks



all right for a sphinx, and Billie is going to look the matter up. The God of War, Huitzilopochtli, is a cor-ker, as his name would imply. He stands about ten feet high and three feet thick. He has two faces and a lot of carving; two hands stand out from the sides of the face like the pose that the typical Jew assumes, when he says. "So help me." The guide was silent about this.

The goddess of water, a monolith eleven feet high and five feet across and weighing about 40,000 pounds. has been pretty badly knocked about, and looked as if she was on the bargain counter.

Dick couldn't stand for the goddess. He suggested that we leave the water question in abeyance and find out what the Aztec took before it. So after looking over a few more of the unsolved problems we took Billie away from the calendar stone, where we found him taking measurements, and picking up George who was absorbed in a part of the Palenque Cross that had just been brought from the ruins, we had the guide take us to a place where the goddess of water was only in evidence as a chaser.

The Monte de Piedad, or National pawn shop, was the next place to visit. This is an institution that could be imitated in other countries and not hurt. It was started in 1776 to protect people from the pawn-brokers that then existed. It was approved by the crown, though run by an individual. No interest was charged, but the party redeeming a pledge was supposed to give something to charity, but as people pledging their jewelry or clothes were hardly in a

giving mood when they redeemed their pledge, interest was charged and the Government took hold of it. You pawn your diamonds today, and interest is charged monthly. While you pay your goods are safe and unexposed, but when you fail, your pledge is placed on sale at a value fixed by the authorities, and should the article be purchased by some one and the price paid be more than the money advanced and interest, the person pledging the article will be paid the difference. Should it not be sold at an appraised value in one month after exposure, the price is reduced, and so on month after month, until it is brought down to the amount advanced and interest. Then it is allowed to stand until sold. This place is also on the main plaza, nearly opposite the Cathedral and is visited by a miscellaneous collection of people about as interesting as are the pledges. We all bought something to make believe we were shopping. I rescued an English sovereign of George III; some patriot had worn it as a scarf pin, and it was as good as when it came out of the mint. I bought it and brought it back to the United States, for though George III was not on friendly terms with us during his lifetime, yet I thought he would feel more at home in San Francisco than in a pawn-shop in the City of Mexico.

George bought a small crucifix, Billie an old sand-glass to learn if time was measured in Mexico as it is at home. Dick did not buy but he went through the back rooms and examined the furniture that had been pledged or manufactured for sale and gave us a

correspondence course in cabinet work, dove-tailing, veneering and grafting.

This National pawn shop was very interesting, but the most pathetic thing in the whole business was the life-sized model of Jesus for sale; and while I am not a special advocate of any particular line of how to get there, I felt that I ought to pay the price and get the image of the lowly Nazarene out of such bad company. The only reason, I suppose, that restrained me was the thought that he was sold into bad company once before for a few pieces of silver (this model was actually placed for sale with a lot of furniture and in full view of every visitor).

From the pawn shop to the thieves' market was but a short walk across the great plaza. I understood you could buy an article at one gate and on going out at another, the same article would be presented to you for sale, some kind pickpocket in the meantime having helped himself to your purchase. It may all be true, but as I did not buy, I cannot verify the statement. The place impressed me as a second-hand junk shop. Everything was old and rusty and consisted of a miscellaneous collection of machettes, stilettos, and other murderous looking weapons. Billie made a trade with a dealer in copper coins and bought a sack full because he noticed a few that he thought were ancient, and when he came to look them over the particularly interesting ones were not visible, so perhaps the market is well named. However, he bought a shell, something like abalone, with a painting of a boat landing, done in a very crude manner. I could

not understand what the dealer was trying to make Billie believe, but I think he was selling it for the landing of Cortez. Anyhow, it was rolled up in an old newspaper, and Billie was exceedingly proud when on opening the paper at the hotel he found the shell was actually with him, and got off a nearly joke by saying that it was the first time that he had beaten the shell game. The Thieves Market at one time occupied the main plaza, but was banished when the square was cleared of all markets, and while I have mentioned this square, I will note a few of the things about it that are interesting. It is known as the Plaza Mayor de la Consituicion. It is the center of the city and the place where the great temple of the Aztecs once stood, and where now stands the Cathedral.

The square was used for three years after the Christian occupancy as a market place and was filled with booths of all characters. but it seems to have been burned down about 1611. The Cathedral is at one end of the Plaza, and at other points are located the National Palace, the Portales, stores with portals extending to the street line over the sidewalk. A small park and a hand-stand opposite the Cathedral, a pretty flower market at another point where the most artistic flower pieces for funerals are made and sold, and not only for funerals but for occasions of a much livelier character.

I could see that George was becoming worried about something and soon found out that he thought we were neglecting the churches which he had special instructions from home to visit. whether for worship

or inspection he did not say, but we complied with his request and visited the Cathedral on the main square.

The Cathedral is old and good-looking and occupies the site of an Aztec temple said to have been the greatest pagan place of worship on the continent.

### THE CATHEDRAL.

The first Christian church on the present site was built about three years after the conquest. The corner stone of the present Cathedral was laid in 1573, the first service was held in 1626 and finally dedicated on the 2nd of February, 1667. The total cost was over \$2,000,000 at the then time price of things. It was over 400 feet long. The inside measures 387x177 feet, from roof to floor, 179 feet. The towers are 203 feet high. The walls and towers are of stone and the roof brick arches and cement. The south front is richly ornamented with carvings and statues of saints and great men in church history. Here are some of the things the guide told us about and to which I listened with great interest, second only to that of George, who was so intent on acquiring church history that he found out the names of the saints to whom the fourteen chapels are dedicated. The most noted one is that of San Felipe de Jusus. Some of the relics of this saint are preserved here; among them is the font in which he was baptized. In this chapel are the remains of Mexico's first emperor. Augustin Yturvide.

In the chapel of San Pedro lies the remains of the first Archbishop of Mexico and Gregorio Lopez, the

Mexican man with the iron mask, said to be a son of Philip the second of Spain.

The choir and the great organs are raised up from the main floor, and in the rear of the choir, is the altar of pardon, in front of which numbers of people of all conditions were kneeling. The main altar was built in 1850. The altar of the kings is said to be the best in the building, and beneath it are buried the heads of the patriots Hidalgo, Allende, Aldama and Jimenez, brought from Guanajuato in state after the independence. The statues and paintings in many parts of the Cathedral are by celebrated artists, and altogether it is a wonder in its size and grandeur. Billie wanted to argue with George about the accuracy of measurements and history, but George would not argue, so we agreed that all we heard was correct. Dick mentioned the fact that the Cantina had many relics in the shape of polque cerveza and aquadente, and we immediately proceeded to investigate the liquid spirits of old Mexico.

### **NATIONAL PALACE.**

The National Palace on the east side of the Plaza Mayor is the capital proper, where the senate meets and the executive offices are located. It is on the site once occupied by Cortez, and before him by Montezuma. The present building was begun in 1692 and has been added to since, and at the present time occupies the full length of the east side of the square, 675 feet, and about the same distance down the side streets. It has an immense court-yard or patio inside, and the

best soldiers are stationed at this point; at least, they struck me as being the best. I don't know how good they are in the fighting line, but one thing I must say: their band was good, as are all military bands in Mexico.

This palace has what is known as the Hall of Ambassadors. It might be called the National Picture Gallery, for paintings of the celebrities in Mexican history here are hung. It is really well worth visiting, and one of the things of special interest in the palace, or, rather on it, is the old bell from the Church of Dolores near San Miguel de Allende. This is the bell that Hidalgo rung on the 16th of September, 1810, calling the Mexicans to arms in the cause of liberty. The people hearing the bell did not know all that it meant, but some were on, as we say. The hour was late (11:40 p. m.), but Father Hidalgo had all arranged and with the celebrated miracle picture of Guadalupe as a banner, started out for the liberty and independence of Mexico. This liberty bell was installed in its present place on the 16th of September, 1896, and was rung at the hour that Father Hidalgo rung it in 1810, and I understand it has become a custom of the president to ring it annually at 11:40 on the night of the call to arms. This bell hangs in front and over the main entrance to the palace.

The Palace of Yturvide, which is now a hotel, was visited next, principally, I think, on the suggestion of Dick, who must have had inside information on liquidation, for before we could get a chance to form an opinion on the residence of a once king, he had us in a

modern-looking, thirst-destroying station, asking us what we would have. We took our medicine; Dick settled for the prescription and we looked the building over on account of its associations. It covers quite a piece of ground, and has entrances from different streets. Its principal one is on 1st San Francisco street. It is of stone and has the usual court or patio. It was built in the 18th century and has been a hotel since 1855. The king was put to death by the natives in 1824 by being shot. Billie wanted to argue with George about the Palenque cross, the tone of the liberty bell, and the absolute authenticity of the Guadalupe tilma image. George refused to argue on sacred subjects, and further reminded the scientific, matter-of-fact Billie that we were in the palace of the king, at which Billie unconsciously doffed his hat, for Billie is some American and the rest English. We made our way out of this royal republican place, and by mutual agreement, went to our hotel and to dinner.

A few blocks down San Francisco street from the Plaza is the Alameda, the promenade park for the fashionable people. Good walks and shade trees are abundant. One side of it fronts on what would be a continuation of San Francisco street, if they didn't change the name every block or so. It is good and wholesome looking and the original of all Alamedas in Mexico, and every town possesses one.

Our visiting was not laid out for us with what might be called system, going when and where the impulse suggested.



### PASEO AND CHAPULTEPEC.

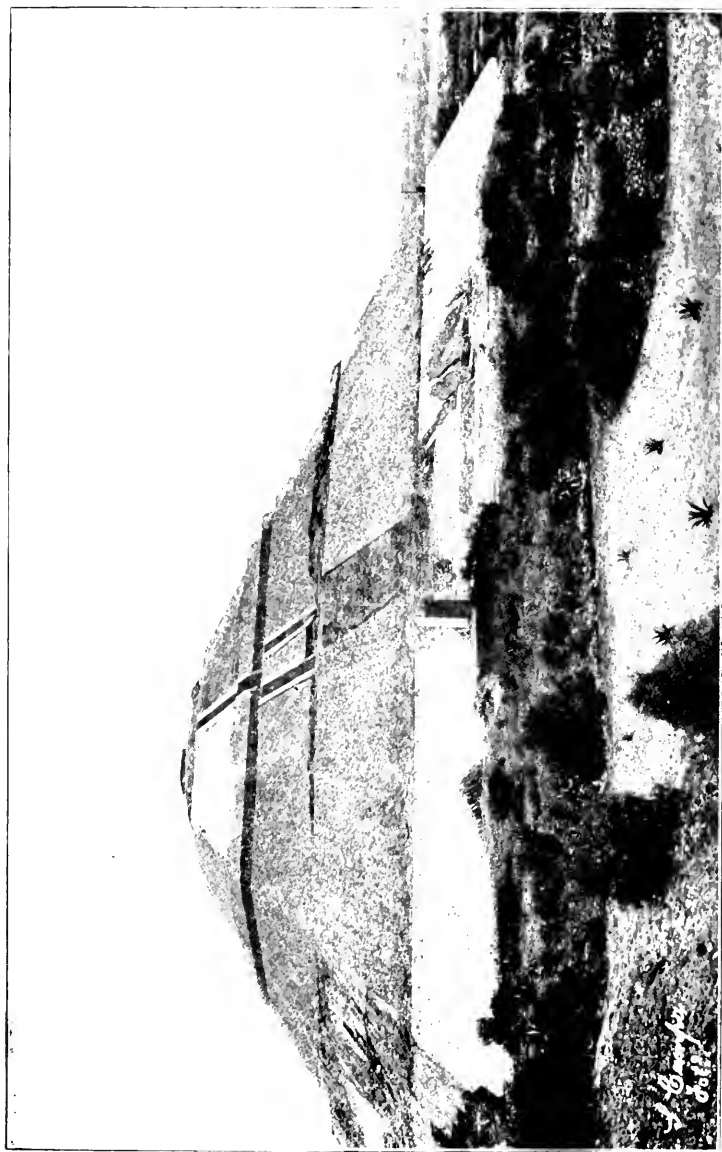
After lunch we found ourselves on the Paseo de la Reforma, the main boulevard connecting the city and Chapultepec, beginning at the door of our hotel, where the Statue Charles IV sits on a horse thoroughly caparisoned and Charles himself all tucked out in his best clothes. His feet, however, hang in the air, as the designer forgot to put stirrups on the saddle, and for which omission it is said he either went insane or killed himself when this error was discovered after the statue had been unveiled. Horse and rider are bronze and the casting is said to be the largest single piece of this metal in the world, weighing 60,000 pounds.

The paseo is wide and well kept, and in the glorietas where the avenue widens, statues of some of the famous men are erected. There are six or seven of these glorietas between the statue of Charles IV and Chapultepec. Stone seats under shade trees on the sidewalk give good resting places from the heat. The avenue was built during the reign of Maximilian and is the show place for all the fashionables of Mexico on Sunday.

We soon arrived at Chapultepec or grass-hopper hill, a beautiful place where it is said once lived Montezuma and the rulers before him. The palace that stands on the hill was built in 1783-5 by one of the viceroys, but has been added to and changed from time to time. It is now the official home of the President and National Military Academy. We were informed of its grandeur inside, but as we did not have

a permit to enter and as we were in the machine, we took interest in the many other things that were shown us. A monument at the base of the hill tells of the defense of the castle by the cadets, when the Americans stormed it in 1847. Some old trees, Montezumas among them; part of the old aqueduct, a semi-circular wall and seats where the graduation of the cadets takes place, were all very interesting.

We visited Coyoacan, once the capital, and older than the City of Mexico. We were shown the house where Cortez lived with Marina, another house with a garden in which is the well where he drowned his wife. On the road we passed a tree where sixteen American soldiers were hung for deserting during the Mexican war. An old church, I think San Juan Bautista, close to which our machine broke down, was visited. We found in it a black Jesus on the cross, and many other relics. We got fixed up and visited San Angel, where an old monastery has been turned into a hotel or road-house. The building was commenced in 1615 and had five gardens in its time. We were shown parts of them that the present occupant is trying to put in shape. It is a very interesting place, and a young boy about twelve who spoke good English, showed us through. He had the history of the place off by heart. We had lunch in one of the dining rooms once used by the monks and climbed on the roof to admire the domes and towers and the view of the surrounding country. We said good-bye to the old house and the young guide and made our way back to the hotel at the beginning of the Paseo de la Reforma.



PYRAMID OF THE SUN (pages 29-33)



### GUADALUPE.

The next day we visited Guadalupe, the Holy of Holies of Mexico. This place has been and is visited by hundreds of thousands annually. The miracles ascribed to it and its history are wonderful. This is the story: It seems that an Indian named Juan Diego, a Christian, lived in the village of Tolpetlac and was in the habit of going around the hillside of Tepeyacac on his way to the church of Santiago Tlalteloleo. On Saturday morning, December 9th, 1531, when on his way as usual, he heard sweet music. He was afraid and on looking up beheld a lady who bade him hear what she had to say. He was to go to the Bishop and tell him that it was her will that a temple in her honor should be erected on that hill. He told his story to Bishop Zumarraga, who sent him away without paying any attention to his story. The Indian returned to the hill and found the lady waiting. He told his story of the Bishop's non-belief; she bade him come again. The following day, Sunday, he went to the hill; the lady appeared again, told him to go once more to the Bishop with her message. He did so and the Bishop, to get rid of him, told him that the lady must send him some token that what he said was true, and sent two of his servants to watch him, but Juan became invisible when he got to the hill, and passing around to the other side, saw the lady alone and told her of the Bishop's request. She told him to come again the next day. When he went home he found his uncle Juan Bernardino ill with the fever, and so sick did he become that Juan feared his uncle was about to die.

On the following morning, he started out to Tlalteloleco to get a confessor and fearing that if he met the lady he might be delayed and his uncle die unconfessed, he went around the other side of the hill, but he met her coming down, calling to him. He told her about his uncle and she informed him that his uncle was again well and ordered him to gather flowers from the barren rocks on the top of the hill, and immediately the flowers grew where flowers had never been before. She told him to fold them in his tilma or cloak and let no one see them till he had shown them to the Bishop. The lady then disappeared and a spring of clear cold water gushed forth from the place where she stood and is still flowing as the holy well.

Juan hurried to the Bishop and on dropping the flowers at his feet found the image of the Virgin on the tilma in the most beautiful colors. The Bishop took the tilma and had Juan escorted home by his servants and when he arrived found his uncle well as the lady had assured him. A chapel was built on the spot where the roses sprung up from the rocks, and on the 7th of February, 1532, the tilma, with the holy image, was placed over the altar within the shrine. Juan and his uncle attended the church till Juan died in 1548.

The legend of the foundation of the church grew, miracles ascribed to the spring multiplied, and finally Rome, under Pope Alexander VII, sanctioned the story. In 1666 a commission was appointed by Senor Don Francisco Siles, Dean of the Cathedral. The men so appointed went to the village of Cuautitlan, where

Juan was born, and had the story confirmed by the natives, some of whom were over a hundred years old. This evidence was sent to Rome but it was not accepted. Still the pilgrims visited the shrine and cures followed. Rome became more reconciled and raised no objections to the recognition of the miracle, and about the middle of the eighteenth century the Virgin of Guadalupe was made the patron saint of Mexico.

Hidalgo took the banner of the Virgin from the church on the 15th of September, 1810, and proclaimed the independence of Mexico, and Guadalupe became the battle cry. There are many churches around the hill where the original one was built fourteen days after the apparition. One hundred years after a larger church was erected, and the tilma placed in it November, 1622, and has remained there ever since, except four years in the Cathedral of the City of Mexico.

In 1887, Father Antonio Plaucarti began the renovation of the church of our Lady of Guadalupe and lived to see its completion. He died in 1898.

The altar containing the frame holding the tilma is Carrara marble; on the left is the figure of Juan Zumarraga; on the right, that of Juan Diego, and in front the kneeling figure of the Archbishop of Mexico under whose direction the work was completed.

The altar holds the tilma in which Juan brought the roses and on which the image appeared. This picture was submitted to artists and learned men for examination, and their verdict was that the picture was not painted, and they could not say that the colors

were put on in any way known to art. This helped the mystery, and in 1895 a crown of gold and gems was contributed by the women of Mexico, the making alone of which cost \$30,000. All the dignataries of the church assembled at the ceremony and tens of thousands of the faithful gathered around the church. This was the crowning glory of the tilma and the Lady of Guadalupe.

The chapel of the well is on the east of the church. It has a dome of glazed tile and just inside and under the dome, is the spring where stood the Virgin. It is sulphur water, and surely a spring. All day long the faithful come to drink at the holy well. The spring is covered by an iron grating. Copper pitchers are lowered to the water by chains. The water is about ten or twelve feet from the surface. It is continually flowing and the force of the water can be seen very plainly. The pitchers or measures by which the water is raised and from which all drink indiscriminately had lips of copper at one time but they are worn away by the application of the lips of the faithful, who come to drink at the holy well. Bottles of earthenware can be bought close by. We procured some and took away with us to California as mementos some of the water of this celebrated spring.

A short distance from the spring is the stone stairway leading to the chapel of the hill. The steps are many and not easy to climb. Beggars or pilgrims sit at different points and about half way up are the stone sails of Guadalupe placed there by some storm



tossed sailors, who, finding themselves in danger, prayed to the Virgin, and promised that if she would bring them safe to land, they would carry the foremast to the hill of Guadalupe and set the sails before her shrine. They were saved and made good their promise, for the sails are there, built of stone, but the canvas is said to be built inside. They are cemented and bellowed as sails would be in a wind. They are quite a feature and can be seen from a great distance. No one seems to know when the sails were built nor the names of the people and this lends added interest to the hill and the Lady.

In the chapel of the hill where the flowers grew from the rocks and in the main church at the foot of the hill are hundreds of testimonials of faith cures or miracles wrought by the Virgin. They consist of paintings, some very crude, drawn by persons cured or saved, and depicting the actual occurrence. Back of the altar in the main church in a place set apart for this purpose the walls are literally covered with testimonials of this character.

Guadalupe, viewed even from the standpoint of a skeptic, is wonderful. A shrine and the religion that can bring the Mexicans that I saw to their knees in humility, must have a beneficial influence on their lives and character. Good-bye, Guadalupe; we leave you without trying to lessen your influence, or solve your mysteries.

### LA VIGA CANAL.

The guide book told us to go to "La Viga Canal," and we went. We went by street car and landed a few blocks from the canal proper, but that was not its fault but ours. I have been to the gap of Dunloe, Ireland, and the Blue Grotto at Capri, Italy, and am prepared to say that the places are all right. So is the Viga Canal: like the others, if one could kill off the people temporarily, and allow a person to enjoy the thing, without being importuned, coerced, or begged for something in the shape of money that you don't want to separate yourself from.

The Viga Canal is beautiful in history, and its floating gardens still float. The paseo de la Viga runs along the bank of the famous canal—so says the book. It does not tell you of the horde of natives who want to sell you their boat, or the worse alternative of walking on a poor street. Of the smell and stench, of the unsanitary conditions of little stagnant ditches across from this canal, on the paseo de la Viga where open seepage filters or stands in gulleys, raising its noise to heaven and to ones nostrils.

The canal itself is muddy-looking and about thirty feet wide. The guide book assures you that the water does not carry off the sewage of the city, but is pure as it comes from the lakes. I don't question the book, but the lake had better get an immunity bath for purity.

The canal, if it were wider, and the water clean, the paseo alongside made good, the stench on the op-

posite side modified, the boats made possible, and the boatmen drowned, then I am inclined to believe that Dick would provide a good lunch, including liquids and solids; George would have faith in the floating garden; Billie would let up on the accuracy of the amount of animal and vegetable matter afloat on the canal and all would be perfectly happy on a trip in one of the many flower-decorated floating palaces to be found on or in the celebrated canal de la Vega.

### THE BULL FIGHT.

In Mexico one could possibly get along without chili con carne, tortillas, or even frijoles, but to get along without seeing a bull fight when opportunity presents itself, would simply be unreasonable. Opportunity and desire worked hand in hand. The day was Sunday and a special event by some celebrated fighters, whether Mexican or Spanish, I don't know. Anyhow, we had our tickets, and soon found ourselves inside, or rather outside, for when you get in, you are out, so far as the sun is concerned. Our seats called for "sombre," but the sun seemed to do business there as well as in the other parts of the arena; but we had come to see a bull fight, and so made up our minds that everything leading up to that event was all right, we paid thirty cents each to a peddler for cushions, which, in a measure saves one from the heat of the concrete seats, and the mention of the seats reminds me that a short description of the bull-pen or arena might be in order.

"The plaza de Toros" is something up to date and

a little ahead in Mexico. It is built of steel and concrete, in circular form. The arena proper, where the fight occurs, is, say 250 feet in diameter. Then comes a bench about two feet high and a fence six feet high, an aisle about four feet; then ten feet above that begins the seats, all in the open, and arranged in such manner that everyone can see. The seating capacity is about thirty-five thousand.

After the president is seated, for even bull fights have referees or judges, and all is ready a bugle blows, and from the side opposite where the judge sits enter the performers. First comes the manager or something of that kind on a horse. He is a regular California cowboy in his Sunday clothes. He rides across the bull pen, and says in Mexican-Spanish that he would like permission to annihilate a few bulls. The president, (also in Spanish) "You're on," then the cowboy makes his horse back away from the president's station, clear across the arena, and the more he makes the horse dance and jump around the more applause he gets.

The curtain now being up, so to speak, a gate opens directly opposite the judge, and in comes the show (all but the bull).

They come in theatrical costumes of silk. First the gentlemen who do the assassination of the bulls; then the *banderilleros*, or assistant assassins, then the *capeadores*, or the hope-to-be bull killers, whose present duty is to be a red rag to the bull, the riders of "has-been" horses that are to be killed by the bulls, and the mules to drag out the dead—all parade to the

center and look pleasant. The president gives his permission and the show is on.

A door opens from which rushes a bull that has been confined in the dark. Just before it reaches the arena a steel barb is stuck in its shoulder with colors to tell the audience where it came from and make the bull mad. The barb usually carries the colors of the breeder and the fight is often decided in the minds of the populace by the colors.

The bull, as it comes in, generally stops on account of the light, but after taking its bearings and finding something to get even on for the prong that is sticking in its shoulder, makes a break for the nearest thing it sees and that is one of the hopes-to-be, with a colored flag, but he gets over the fence. The bull then sees a horse and a man. The horse is old and brought out for the purpose of additional excitement, and whetting the bull's appetite for battle. The rider deliberately rides the poor old thing blindfolded, on one side, and meets the onslaught of the bull. The man unfortunately can see. The horse is gored; if not killed, a second chance is presented. Better be killed in the first attack, old hack, for if only ripped up and the judge's bugle sounds the end of the first round, and you are ridden out, you will be sewed up and ridden in again for another bull. After a number of attacks, and the horses have or have not been killed, a bugle sounds and one part of the fight is over and the horses are taken away. The bull looks the situation

over and chases the epeadore, whose duty it is to attract the attention of the bull.

The banderillero now does his act by attracting the bull's attention, and as it charges, he steps to one side and plants two banderillas in the bull's shoulder. It is quite a feat to stick the banderillas correctly, as they must not be placed back of the shoulder. The banderilla is an iron dart about two feet long, barbed at the point, and when correctly placed will stand up straight. The bull, about this time, is thoroughly aroused to madness, and it tears around the ring, only to get some more banderillas stuck in its other shoulder by one of its tormentors. One of the banderilleros sat down in a chair and after the bull got its eye on him and his flag, charged at full speed. The man sat in the chair till the bull was within about five feet of him; then, jumping to one side, let the bull pass, at the same time planting two more of the darts in its shoulder. It seems that the bull, when it charges shuts its eyes, and the bull fighter, knowing this, figures accordingly. This fellow who did the chair act, then took a long vaulting pole and let the bull charge him, and as it approached, he stuck the pole in the ground and vaulted, the bull striking the pole, and the man landing behind the bull.

After these gentlemen have shown what they can do in banderilla sticking, the bugle sounds and then comes the great act of killing. The matador, with his sword and red flag, comes out and makes a speech, while the other fellows are entertaining the bull at the other end of the ring. After telling the audience

how he is going to do it and throwing his hat to some one, as much as to say, "If I don't do this right, I will eat my hat," or words to that effect, he proceeds to have the bull charge him by flaunting his red rag. The bull is allowed to get a number of chances at the matador, and usually winds up by standing with head down while the flag is flaunted before him. The matador points his sword and the bull charges. The matador jumps to one side and as he does so, plunges the sword through the bull's shoulder into its heart. Should the thrust be true, the bull either falls or runs a few paces and gradually sinks to the ground; then another man, called the cachetero runs up and with a knife cuts the spinal cord, and the bull, sure enough, is a dead one. Sometimes the matador fails to kill and the bull will run around the ring with the sword of the matador sticking in his shoulder. Then he or some other matador must let the bull charge, and snatch the sword out and try again.

The crowd shows its approval or disapproval in a manner not to be forgotten. Should the matador kill his bull as he has promised the audience will go wild and throw their hats and cigars into the ring to show their approval and yell like so many Indians but should the unfortunate swordsman fail after a number of trials to dispatch his bull he will soon find out that he is not one of the most beloved in Mexico.

The bull being dead, four mules are driven into the arena and the dead bull is hitched onto a tackle and dragged around the ring and out. Six bulls, I understand, constitute a show. Six were killed

at the fight I saw and two refused to fight and were run off the field in disgrace but you could almost see them wink the other eye when a couple of trained old bulls came in and ran around the ring with them and led them out. I don't know which bull had the best of the argument, the one that fought and was killed, or the one that wouldn't fight and got killed because he didn't.

The fight is over. The people file out. Then comes the company of soldiers that have been on duty inside the arena to preserve order, and it seems from what I have heard that their presence is necessary, for on more than one occasion the audience have broken up everything they could get hold of when the fight did not come up to their standard of blood and thunder.

I have seen the show and would not have missed it, but would not care to see it as a continuous performance. The killing of the bulls is not so exceedingly brutal, since they are killed as a rule anyway, but the slaughter of the poor horses, is, in my opinion, without excuse. Had the horse a run for its money, or a show for its life, there might be some sport in it, but to deliberately ride a poor old hack of a horse against a maddened bull and allow the bull to rip it up, I consider not only brutal but cowardly. If they would put a good rider on a California bronco and let the rider use his horsemanship in getting away from the bull, I would think it sport, but to kill a poor old hack of a horse for the edification of the crowd is



enough to condemn the whole business of bull fighting.

I had an argument with one of the lovers of the sport about the horse killing, and he tried to justify it by saying that the horses were old and useless, and put the question to me like this: Would you rather see an old horse hitched up to a carriage and whipped because it could not go the pace its driver required, or brought into the arena after it had been given an injection that practically killed all feeling, yet at the same time gave it a temporary fire, and be killed by the horns of the bull, the end sudden and practically painless, when otherwise, life would be one of pain and misery. I didn't know then and I don't know now about the life or death of the horse from this point of view, but I do know that if the horse was supposed to be killed in a fight it should be given a show to defend itself, instead of being blindfolded. It seems to me if they blindfolded the rider and let the horse have its sight, there might be more justice in the fight than the way I saw it.

The people seemed to enjoy it, and as it is their national sport, if I don't like it, I can keep away from it, and go and see a prize fight where a couple of gentlemen will be able to punch each other to a jelly in an approved and scientific manner before an audience of the most enlightened people on the face of the earth.

### THE PYRAMIDS.

The following day was devoted to visiting the pyramids of the sun and moon at San Juan Teolihua-

can, about twenty-five miles from the city. We got an early train and after an hour's run found ourselves on the platform of the station, and about three miles from the pyramids proper. How to get there became the question. We inquired and were given to understand that a short line railroad across the street or plaza would take us there. We found what might be a station or engine house; the tracks were there and a handcar somewhat larger than that used by road crews. We sat down on it and wondered if this was to be our train. We hadn't long to wait, for in a minute five bare-footed natives came running out from somewhere and got aboard. I gave an imitation of a train whistle. They laughed and immediately started the machine, pumping in the most approved railroad fashion. The road was up hill and the work was hard. They tried to be sociable in Mexican and we endeavored to reciprocate in English, but I noticed that we never saw a joke at the same time. It was usually a laugh by the Mexicans followed by a silence on our part after we had hurled a few well chosen sentences at them in the purest Castilian. Our laugh came in at the evident mistake that had been made somewhere for we were either Government officials or guests expected by the officers. This conclusion we arrived at by their desire to get us there, and the apparent respect shown us.

We arrived at a gate or entrance leading to the pyramids. We alighted from our observation car and a hurried conversation took place, the five Mexicans all talking at once. I took it for granted that money

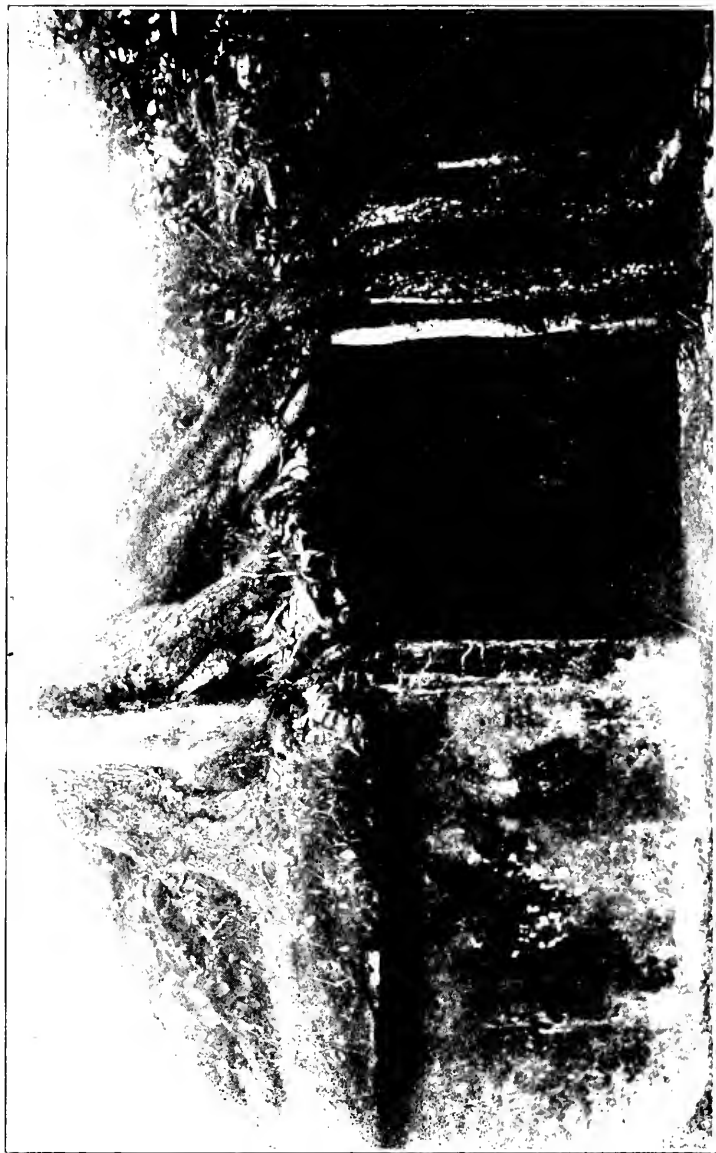
was the chief topic of interest, and proceeded to inform them that they would receive a rich reward on delivering us once more at the railroad station at San Juan. This did not seem to meet with unanimous approval, and I finally convinced them that one of their party should accompany us. This seemed to be more or less satisfactory. The car was taken off the track and carried inside the gate, and we all proceeded to what appeared to be a guard house. We were confronted by soldiers, and I was informed that I would have to leave my camera there while inspecting these monuments to Mexican greatness, as no tourist was permitted to take pictures.

Our train crew and escort we soon discovered were soldiers, and on their arrival, were apparently put on duty, and that was the last we saw of them. We regretted this very much as we had intended to give them some money for their trouble. A guide was detailed to show us about and take us to the top if we so desired, but we didn't. We walked around the pyramid of the sun and climbed part way up, took a look at the moon, returned to the guard house, bought some photographs, treated the official photographer and others as we found beer for sale, tipped the guide, got our belongings and started for the gate and our hand car. But the train crew was missing and probably at that moment was watching us from afar and hurling a few choice morsels of dialect at us for our Gringo meanness. While we were wondering if we would have to be like bad actors and count the railroad ties, a wagon carrying some tourists arrived

on the scene, and we bargained with the driver to take us back to the station. We arrived, I was going to say, safe and sound, but I think it would be better to just say, we arrived, for the road over which that wagon found its way was fearfully and wonderfully made, but the ruins of shrine and wall strewn along the route compensated for the ruined road we traveled, but all things Mexican have an end, and so did our road. We had about an hour to contemplate the picture and our experience before the train arrived to take us back to the City of Mexico.

The visit itself, after all was over, was satisfactory, and we look back on it as one of much interest.

The pyramids of the sun and moon, we learned, are about twenty-five or thirty miles east of the City of Mexico. The history of their building, like that of many other monuments of that country, is lost, because as is believed of the destruction of the picture writings of the Aztecs and Tolties by the Spaniards. Be this as it may the pyramid of the sun as it stands today is 761 by 721 feet at the ground line, 216 feet 8 inches high and 105 by 59 feet at the top. The pyramid of the moon is 511 by 426 feet at the base, 151 feet high and 19 feet 8 inches square on top. Both are faced on the outside with large boulders or rough broken rock of irregular size from 8 to 18 inches square, oblong or round. The sun is apparently solid, as no chambers have ever been found in it. The pyramid of the moon, though smaller, has an added interest in the fact that some years ago an entrance to a chamber was discovered and when the chamber was explored,



*PALENOQUE (pages 73-81)*



it was found to face due north and south. Its walls were of cut stone; its size we did not get.

The valley in which these pyramids are built is said to contain many wonderful ruins, and a causeway has been traced from the citadel passing the pyramid of the sun and ending at the pyramid of the moon. This is known as the street of the dead. Along its sides are old ruins supposed to be shrines and in which have been found chests of cut stone containing skulls and ornaments, but the history of the builders and their lives has been left largely to conjecture.

The absolute depth of the foundation of these pyramids has never been ascertained, but it is thought that if they were uncovered, they would be the largest in the world.

The next day was devoted to automobiling. We took in the American cemetery where the remains of seven hundred and fifty American soldiers killed in the Mexican war, lie buried in one common grave, over which is erected a monument. Many other distinguished Americans are buried in this, the only spot in Mexico where the American flag can wave alone. The place is in charge of an old veteran of the civil war. His name is Thomas. He is paid by the United States Government, and deserves great credit for the care he bestows on it. We tried to give him something for the care of the flowers, but he wouldn't have it, declaring that Uncle Sam paid for the care of all things pertaining to the place, including himself.

We were very much pleased at the old man's pride and his loyalty to his country.

On our return from the cemetery we passed the "Portales" of the letter writers. Here is a street, or at least a block where the sidewalk or portales is devoted to the reading and writing of letters for the benefit of those who don't know the language, or more especially for those who cannot read or write. A letter is taken to one of the men or women at this place and it is read to the owner as often as necessary to get all the contents into his head. Then the owner of the letter either goes home to impart the news to the family and frame a reply or has it answered immediately. Typewriting machines have been introduced lately, and we were informed that quite a protest was raised by the natives against the American millionaire-like machine for letter writing.

Many amusing stories are told about the young swain going with a love letter from his inamorita to have it read by one of these professional letter writers, and one in particular is told for gospel truth as having happened on the portales, and runs as follows: A young girl whose lover had gone away and from whom she had received a letter hied her to the portales to have it read. Her first question was, "Who is it from?" and when told she insisted on the letter reader putting cotton batting in her ears so that she could not hear what was about to be read. The story is a good one but it has been told so often in the United States that when it got out of standing as a joke, it



betook itself to the portales in the City of Mexico.

In motoring one is attracted by the number of small boys that run immediately in front of the passing machine. I remarked on this fact and was informed that they were small bull fighters or boys that "hoped to be," and they passed as near as possible, making believe the machine was a bull and showing their dexterity by touching the auto as it came within an inch of running them down. I found that boys play bull fighting on the streets and plazas as boys in the United States play tag or ball. One boy becomes the bull and about three or four others are matadores or toreadores. The fighters use an old newspaper for a flag, and the bull boy charges one at a time. The game is for the bull to butt a fighter and the fighter shows his cleverness by side stepping, and I was told that many of these small boys actually become sure enough bull fighters through the dexterity acquired in their game of make-believe.

We had now seen as much of the city and its surroundings as time would allow, so we procured tickets for Vera Cruz, and the following morning at 7 a. m., pulled out on our way to places and scenes truly Mexican.

The journey from the city to Esperanza is uninteresting except here and there, such as, passing in view of the pyramids of the sun and moon before mentioned, and the stop at Apizaco, where canes of all sizes with curious carvings are exposed for sale—the

large ones are like cord wood and the smallest like tooth picks.

The country through which we passed is barren except for cactus or the pulque plant. I was attracted to it at first on account of its resemblance to the century plant. Thousands of acres of land seemed to grow nothing else. The plant is set out like a vineyard or orchard, in regular rows. We had heard about the pulque and during our visit to the city had visited some of the cantinas devoted exclusively to the sale of that beverage; and now we were in the midst of its cultivation, if such a word can be used, for it seems to come out of a soil that positively refuses to produce anything else in the shape of plant life. I was astonished to learn the extent of the traffic in its product, and will just let the train take care of itself between Apizaco and Esperanza while I set down something about it.

The maguey plant produces pulque tequila and mescal, the last two liquors being obtained by distilling the roots and lower leaves, and the pulque by fermenting the sap or juice of the heart and upper leaves. It blooms but once, and when that event takes place, what would be the flower is cut out, leaving a bowl-like hole in the center, into which the sap from the leaves empty, and as each leaf pours out its juice it withers and dies. This juice is called "honey water." The natives come daily and from each plant so tapped suck up with a gourd from one to two gallons till the plant is dead. This juice is emptied into a hogskin and from the hogskin to a cask in the wagon. It is

then taken to the ranch or hacienda and fermented, and special trains are run at night on passenger train time to get the pulque on the city market before it spoils. I was told that four long trains laden with this milk-looking "jag produceer" arrive every morning, and is immediately distributed to the four hundred cantinas that make a specialty of dispensing fresh the pulque that would spoil if left in the pig skin. but makes the world look brighter when stowed away in the hogskin.

Tequila is an intermediate between pulque and mescal. The latter is the strongest and has about the same strength as American tangle foot; tequila about the strength of the so-called California foot juice, and pulque the characteristics of them both when taken in sufficient quantities.

The mountains of Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl 17,782 and 16,060 feet high respectively, can be seen for quite a distance on this road. Then comes Mount Malintzi, 13,462 feet, along the base of which the train wends its way. About one o'clock in the afternoon, the train arrives at Esperanza, a junction 8,043 feet above the sea. A good meal is served in twenty minutes. It consists of about seven courses, if you want to take it that way. The different dishes are passed and if you are lively you get your share, although there is a good supply, but the courses come so rapidly that you have about satisfied yourself what you are going to eat when the next course comes along.

After lunch I lit a cigar and looked around while the others of our party were yet at the table and on

my return to the platform saw my train about a hundred yards down the track on its way to Vera Cruz. Billie was on the rear platform in company with some Mexican gentleman. He beckoned me to hurry up, and the Mexicans signalled with their hands to go back. All hands became more or less confusing in their signs. I did not know whether from Billie's sign to run ahead and catch up with the train, or take the Mexican's signal to mean that the train was only switching. My doubts were ended by the train stopping and Billie shouting that I had been left. When this fact dawned on me, I think I broke the sprinting record to get aboard.

The ride from Esperanza down through and around the mountains to Maltrata, a distance of seventeen miles, by winding rail and a drop of 2,493 feet, is as pretty a piece of scenery as it has ever been my privilege to behold. A stop is made at Alta Luz for the engine to take water and this is the point where everybody gets out, for the scene is almost beyond description. The guide book tells you that you are twelve miles by rail from Maltrata, yet there, two thousand feet straight down below you, can be seen the red tiles of the roofs, the streets and gardens, the fields and rivers, in all their varied colors, like a miniature landscape.

The railroad can be seen on the mountainside at different levels on its way to the valley, and beyond all this wonderful scene on the opposite side, arises the tall peak of Mount Orizaba, 17,356 feet high. The grandeur of this picture is enhanced by the fact that it

comes on one so suddenly. After passing over a bridge or trestle the height of which makes your hair raise in protest or fear, you plunge into a tunnel and from its darkness out into the bright sunlight directly upon the scene above spoken of. As we descended over bridges, through tunnels, or elinging to the mountain side, it is surprise after surprise. The road at one place enters the Canon "Infiernillo" or the ravine of the "Little Hell." At this point a bridge one hundred and forty feet high is built over a roaring cascade. The mountain side is a sheer up and down precipice with the water falling into the chasm below.

After losing the view, by running around the mountain and through a tunnel, we come to the valley of the cascades; from this on we are in the tropics, and coffee and cane fields, bananas and other tropical products are on either side.

We soon arrive at Maltrata, where we stop for a few minutes. The difference between the northern Mexican and the people we now found was a revelation. Here was cleanliness and life; the women dressed in light washable material and the men in white wide pants and wider sombreros. All was color and gayety, and happiness seemed in the very air.

A run of about three quarters of an hour through cotton fields and orange groves lands us in the town of Orizaba where we break our journey for the present.

### ORIZABA.

The town proper is about a half mile from the station; is old and pretty and had quite a history

even before the conquest, having been noted then, as it is now, for its climate; its freedom from fever making it a resort for the people from the coast. It has one long street and several cross ones of smaller length and width. Its market is one of the principal features, and the tropical fruit display is something to marvel at. The churches, of course, take the lead in importance. The first El Calvario, later the Santa Teresa, was built in 1564. The present parish church is the church that was completed in 1720. It is called the San Miguel. It is of stone and required about fifty years to build. It contains a fine inlaid chest of ebony and ivory for the keeping of the vestments. Many other churches of almost equal age and importance are to be found in different parts of the town, and each one with its particular history.

The coffee groves are so abundant the guide book tells us that we will be at a loss to know whether the coffee groves are in Orizaba or Orizaba in the coffee groves.

The town is situated on a terrace, the first one above the Tierra Caliente, snuggling close to the mountain, beyond which can be seen the snow capped top of the volcano of Orizaba.

Cotton cuts quite a figure in the industry of the place, and many mills are in the immediate neighborhood. We had the pleasure of visiting one during our stay, and this is how it happened.

A play of some kind was running at the theatre, and we took it in the first evening of our arrival. We went out between the acts and on our return Billie

wandered down the isle with an unlighted cigar in his mouth. We were not sure about smoking, but felt more or less safe, as a person may smoke almost anywhere in Mexico. We had scarcely sat down, when a gentleman with great earnestness of manner requested Billie to remove his cigar. He spoke English but Billie, ever ready for an argument, wanted to know why, and was informed that should he smoke he would be arrested, and ignorance would prove of no avail. He might be kept in prison or given a trial, as the authorities deemed best. The warning and explanation were taken with thanks and we became acquainted with the gentleman, who happened to be the manager of a cotton mill, and who extended to us an invitation to pay it a visit.

The following day Billie and George started out to get a carriage, Dick and I looking around and waiting their return. When we got back to the hotel we learned that they had secured one, but not finding us, had started off for the mill. We got another carriage, one I think that had been used in the procession at the laying of the corner stone of the first church in Orizaba, and started out after our friends.

The road was up hill, and the "rocky road" to Dublin was a bituminized boulevard compared to this, so rough indeed was the road, that we positively made up our minds that we would get spilled, and made arrangements according to what side we went over on as to how we would act so as to preserve our lives; but we arrived, much to the surprise of our friends and the manager, who were out on the street waiting our

coming. Finding it difficult to get there by carriage, they had dismissed theirs and walked making much better time than we with the horses. The manager dismissed our conveyance saying that he would not allow us to try to get back down hill with it, but would take us in his private street car which he did eventually.

The factory employs about three hundred men who do everything from the reception of the raw material to the completion of the finished article. The factory is an English concern and the manager informed us that he would not allow a woman to work in the place. After we had been initiated into all the mysteries of cotton manufacturing, a couple of mules were hitched onto a street car of good size and we were driven in state as far as the entrance of the main street beyond which private street cars were not allowed to go. After taking a snapshot of the two-mule power car and saying "good-bye" to its owner, we lit fresh cigars as a sort of thanksgiving not only for the pleasure of having seen the cotton mill, but also for the fortunate circumstance of having saved Billie from languishing in prison for violating the sanctity of a Mexican theatre by smoking an American cigar.

We took in the many attractions of the town and vicinity; had pointed out to us a road cut by the French soldiers from which they had bombarded the town and where they defeated the Mexican troops on the night of July 13th, 1862.

Orizaba was a favorite resort of Maximilian during his short reign as emperor, and one could not



blame him for his choice if the place and people were as clean then as now.

The brewery of Orizaba is quite an institution and its beer is as celebrated in Mexico as is that of Milwaukee in the United States. Orizaba, with its altitude of 4,832 feet above Vera Cruz, and its eighty-two miles distance, is a place to rest and recuperate; but we must hurry on, so, at 3:45 in the afternoon of the second day of our visit, we wheeled our way out with pleasant memories of its people and scenery.

A run of about twenty minutes brings to view a horseshoe bend of immense size, curving over the waters below. The Rio Grande can be seen from another point close by, about a thousand feet below in the ravine.

We went up grade a little by way of variety through the town or village of Fortin, on and down through fields of sugar cane, palm and palmetto, coffee plantations, orange groves, pineapple and bananas succeeded each other or mingled together. The sight is good to look upon, and when the whistle blows and the train stops at Cordova you have become quite enchanted with the tropical climate and its products, including the picturesque native of both genders.

### **VERA CRUZ.**

A short stop and away we go through more tunnels and plantations, winding in and out and up and down. We finally take an easy grade down the slope leading into Vera Cruz, at which place we arrived at, 7:35 p. m. We had been told the hotel to put up at,

and soon engaged two carriages or victorias, but found we could not get our hand baggage all in. We were relieved of this trouble, however, by a small army of cargadores. Each one took a piece of baggage and was at the hotel as soon as the carriages, and each demanded fifty cents for his individual piece. They knew we were tenderfeet, so we paid after a protest. It was only twenty-five cents in American money, but a person gets awfully stingy when in a country cheaper than his own.

We soon found out that we were in the right town, but the wrong hotel, for after seeing our rooms, we had a shrewd suspicion that we were not at the Palace or St. Francis in San Francisco, and after dinner our suspicion became a certainty. We looked around town and located a good looking hotel and made up our minds to make it our stopping place on our return trip.

We slept better than we anticipated, but were up early and down to breakfast. Mine host was on hand. He looked like a retired pirate, but one who might go back into business if necessity required. He spoke English in a most villainous manner and served his meals as he spoke. We wanted oranges; he would send for them he said; he did, and while the official whose duty it was to purchase fruit at the market was busy, we ordered the other dishes. About the time breakfast was cooked, the orange official returned with a miscellaneous collection of fruit, but no oranges.

One particular fruit or vegetable placed before us attracted general attention. In appearance it resem-

bled a rough skinned Irish potato before cooking. We examined it but were at a loss to know whether to cut it, peel it or bite it. We decided to show our ignorance and enquired. Our pirate host told us they were zapotos; he cut one in halves and gave us a tea spoon. We dug into the meat part of it which looked something like the inside of a green fig, but tasted different. We found them quite palatable and ate them with a relish. Soft boiled eggs, coffee and tortillas completed our breakfast.

Our next desire was to see the town and procure steamer tickets for Frontera. After some enquiry we found the ticket office and proceeded to exchange our limited Spanish for their lack of English, in our endeavor to separate ourselves from the money necessary to get passage on the steamer Tehautepec. After a terrific slaughter of both languages we found ourselves on the street holding on to a piece of paper telling us all about ourselves and assuring us of cabin seats and every berth therein contained.

We then started to take in the town, and by good luck, met with two gentlemen from Pittsburg whose acquaintance we had made on the train, and who were also on their way to Frontera. One of the Pittsburgers, a Mr. Morrison, had a firm grip on the language and a fair knowledge of the town, so he was of great assistance to us in making purchases and getting the price of articles down to almost normal.

A pair of long boots that the store-keeper wanted fifteen dollars for, became a part of my outfit for ten. We made other necessary purchases on the same basis

and devoted the balance of the day to sight-seeing.

The plaza, cigar manufacturing, the docks, the streets and the buzzards, are the chief attractions.

The plaza, in the midst of the business center is good. Under its trees are tables and seats where you may rest and find shelter from the sun, have drinks and cigars or sandwiches served, but it is wise to keep your hand on the sandwich, if you have one, or the buzzard will be in a square meal at your expense. These birds are the scavengers of the streets and are protected by law. They are more plentiful in the plaza than the natives and have less regard for your comfort.

The principal plaza is bounded by the jail on one side, and the portales directly opposite, a good hotel and business stores on the third side, and a church on the fourth; from these points radiate the business life of the city.

The houses in this immediate neighborhood are good and the stores of like character. The streets are a revelation in make and cleanliness, a new sewer system having recently been established and the streets bituminized. All this was done because the Government demanded it as a preventive against plague.

Vera Cruz used to be a pest hole but since sanitary conditions have been established it is one of the healthiest cities in the country. It is the principal port and has been for hundreds of years. Formerly vessels had to lay outside but jetties and breakwaters have been constructed and vessels can now come up to the piers. Vera Cruz is also the home of the Mex-

ican cigar, the plant being raised in large quantities in the surrounding country. We bought them and smoked them in all their varied sizes and prices. They have a flavor all their own and many people like them. As an outdoor cigar they fill the bill but a half dozen smokers in a close room would not be pleasant company for a person not an inveterate lover of the weed.

We spent the evening in the plaza listening to the music of a good band and watching the never ending procession of the senors and senoritas moving around in stately grace and I must say that with the same number of people in a like resort in our own country the degree of decorum would not be maintained that can be witnessed in any plaza in the cities of Mexico.

We retired to our hotel pleased with the thought that it was to be our last night in this substitute for our own fireside.

Next morning we busied ourselves with packing and getting ready for the sea trip to Frontera, and about two in the afternoon settled up with our pirate landlord, who had an extra day charged to our account. His attention being called to the calendar, he climbed down very gracefully and blamed it on the bookkeeper.

I told him to order two carriages to take our traps to the boat, and he was so obliging that he went after them himself, but returned in about ten minutes with the information that it was impossible. We were apparently up against it, so to speak, but the good man had been looking after our welfare for the ten cargadores that brought our things to the hotel

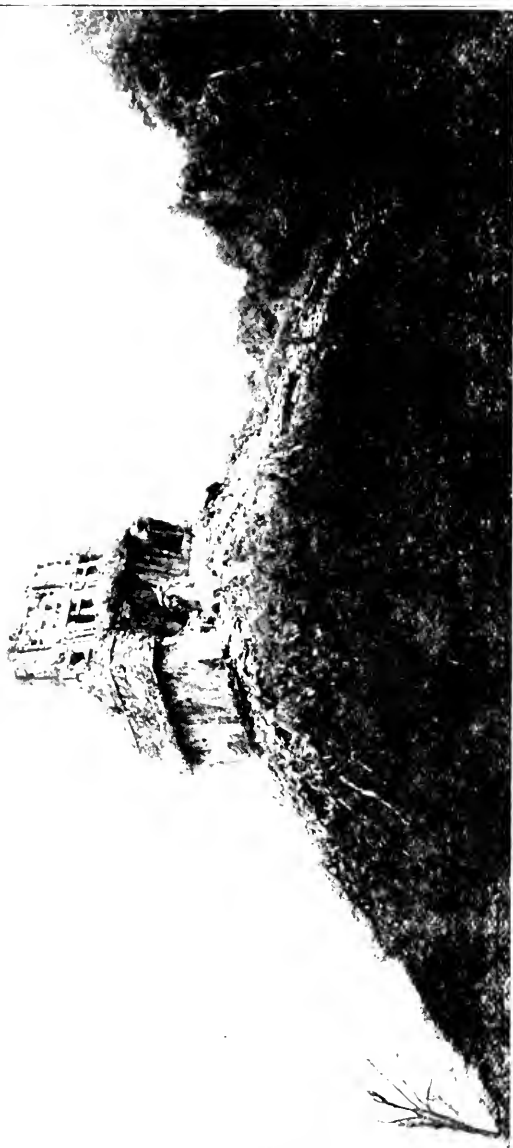
were all lined up in the hall ready to carry one piece each at fifty cents per. We saw his little game and I told the boys to get our traps down and I would look for the carriages. I went to the plaza and returned in less than five minutes with them. We piled our things in and drove off leaving the pirate chief and his crew ready to hoist the black flag, and warm though the day was, I warrant that the temperature around that hotel went up several degrees in the next few minutes.

We arrived safely at the wharf and had to pile the things aboard ourselves. We found our stateroom and proceeded to make ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit.

The Tehautepec is a steamer of about 1,100 tons. The cabins all open on the main dining room, and the berths are not comfortable looking. Ours consisted of four and a lounge.

We steamed out at three, but for some reason did not get beyond the breakwater till after six. The dinner bell rang and we proceeded to the dining room in which were twenty-eight seats around the table, and apparently a passenger for each seat. The table was decorated with five plates in front of each seat, one on top of the other and the top one for soup. The meal was served in courses and as each course was finished a plate was removed and when the last one was taken up, you knew you had dined, though they put on some extra frills on this occasion by serving a fruit plate with bananas, chicos, zapatos and cheese. I partook of all the dishes served, as if I were a native, the soup

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first, then something resembling beef stew with the necessary hot stuff; fish was served next, after which a meat dish with accessories. Another dish of conglomerate, and then the clean plate, fruit and cheese. Coffee was served ad lib., but butter was an unknown quantity.

We remained on deck until after one in the morning as the air was moist and clammy, which, combined with the odor of the dinner, rendered life in the cabin anything but a place of cold storage.

When we finally decided to turn in, we found that Billie had enseoned himself in one corner of the social hall above the dining room, and was loudly proclaiming his entire indifference to everything on land or sea through the medium of a fully developed American snore.

George selected one of the upper berths to get away from the rats; Dick took the lounge and I wrapped a sheet tightly around me after having removed my coat and shoes and tried to be comfortable in the lower berth, where turning over from one side to the other meant scraping my nose on the under side of the upper berth. We left the door and window open, and the noise wafted across the dining room from other open doors proclaimed the indifference of many of the passengers to rats or weather conditions.

The morning found us up early, but not the first, as was evidenced by the single roller towel hung up in the wash room above two basins. The basin had seen much service that morning and the towel more. I called the steward and on request was somewhat sur-

prised to get a clean one. I used one-half of it and called Dick so that he might use the other half before some native got his face in first.

The morning was all that could be desired. We walked around till about eight o'clock when I went to find out what was the matter with breakfast. The steward informed me that the first meal served would be at eleven o'clock; we could have a cup of coffee and a cracker if we desired. We took what was offered and at eleven a meal almost the counterpart of the evening before was dished up. We took that also and it was our last meal aboard, as we sighted land at 3:30 p. m., and in about an hour had the pilot on board. He took us over the bar and then left us to find our way up the river alone, a distance of about eight miles. We arrived safely and at 6:30 tied up at the wharf.

### **FRONTERA.**

We were then taken in tow by a Chinaman, Hop Wah, and piloted up town to the Grand Hotel run by the aforesaid Hop. He spoke Spanish fluently I suppose, but had not gotten beyond the "no sabe" in English.

His hotel once belonged to the "Four Hundred" and Hop was proud of his establishment, which consisted of five rooms and shower bath in a one-story adobe building. Each room had its special interest for Hop, but the shower bath was his particular pride, as it was the only one in town. It was a dark place about six feet square with stone walls and floor. When you wanted to use it a lighted candle was furnished

which you placed on the floor or stuck against the wall, but in either case, when the water was turned on the candle went out. But this was of little consequence as when you had enough you let go the string the water stops and you make a break for the door and your towel. We were rather amused at the pride with which Hop showed this treasure, but we came to appreciate it as much as he did, for we found occasion to use it more than once a day.

One room containing four beds was assigned to our party; the beds were cot-shaped and mosquito-netted, stretched canvas for a mattress, and a sheet for a covering, but the sheet was superfluous as the days were hot and the nights more so, if possible. But with all the inconveniences we liked the place on account of the good nature of Senor Hop Wah, whose only desire was to please. American cooking was practiced in this establishment and that in itself accounted for our Pittsburg friends recommending it to our consideration.

Frontera is a town of from one to six thousand population, depending on who is giving you the information. I think about fifteen hundred nearer the mark. It has its plaza and one street about a block from the water front and paralleling the river. The houses are the usual affairs of one story, except on the plaza where some are two stories. The residence section on two sides of the square is neat and clean; the windows and doors are open in the evening. Music can be heard in many of these homes, but the mandolin or guitar is noticeable by its absence for the crown-

ing glory of the front room seems to be a piano, where it can be had.

Fresh vegetables are at a premium in this place as they are all imported, and when green onions can be had in the market, they are sold individually and bring quite a price. So much are they prized, indeed, that when a person has partaken of them at dinner he makes a point of getting into conversation with some one whom he wants to impress with his riches. He stands close up so that the smell of the onion may impress the other with his financial standing, for none but a millionaire can afford the luxury of a green onion breath.

The two most important buildings on the plaza are the church and market. The church comes first in importance in all Mexican towns, but the market is a close second.

Another peculiarity about Frontera that I found in no other town was the absence of tipping. On our first evening, we in company with the Pittsburgers, sat in front of a cantina where tables and chairs are set out. We had beer and other things and I tipped one of the waiters. A gentleman who knew the place and its customs told me to watch and see what the waiter did with the tip. I watched and he went with the bill and tip and rang the whole thing up on the cash register. I don't know how the custom of non-tipping started. It must have happened, I surmise, that once upon a time a waiter fell dead when given a tip, and

that this became a warning to all others, for the native is great on tradition and superstition.

While sitting as above described, we were approached by a gentleman who turned out to be the captain of the good ship *Reerio* that we had chartered to take us up the river to El Salto. During the course of the conversation he informed us that his vessel was 28 feet long, six and a half feet beam, sixteen horsepower, and propelled by gasoline. We decided to start the following day, Sunday. The distance was 180 miles or leagues—sometimes it was leagues, at other times, miles.

Sunday was spent victualing the ship and getting other sundries in shape; the crew of two Mexican boys were on shore leave and when it came time to up anchor the entire crew was absent at roll call and it took the gallant Captain Van Horn till eleven at night to round them up.

The skipper was mad clear through and the crew knew it. We should have sailed long ere this, he explained to us, to get the benefit of slack water. Anyhow, we got away. The night was beautiful. The moon was full. The river, about two hundred yards wide with thickly wooded lowland on either side. Steamer chairs were placed amidships, which were to act as seats by day and couch by night, and many leagues had been sailed before our chairs became couches.

Daylight found us stirring but not far. The promenade deck did not compare at all favorably with many of the ocean liners that I have traveled on. The

wash room was arranged on the port side of the engine house. Its equipment consisted of a tin basin, a piece of soap wrapped up in fibre, a towel and a piece of glass tacked up against the frame of the engine house.

The toilet making was not so much a question of time as of room. We took turn about and managed to get the part of our face that we could see in the glass presentable to ourselves, at least, after which the towel was washed by one-half of the ship's crew and the laundry hung up to dry.

Speaking of the crew, I have just completed my inspection and have discovered their duties and official stations. The crew, generally speaking, numbers two, all told. The junior officer was a boy of about sixteen barefooted summers. His duties consisted of steering and dish-washing, but when it was his watch below he cleaned the lamp, filled the oil tank, peeled potatoes and smoked cigarettes.

The chief officer was a young man of about twenty-two. He was chief engineer and cook; he also had sundry unofficial duties to perform, such as relieving the helmsman, swearing at the junior officer when the captain was attending to something else, sharpening his pocket knife and polishing a sea bean for a pendant to his watch chain when he got one.

The captain, Van Horn, was a Yankee, sir, and didn't care if all the greasers in the country knew it. He had navigated the river for twenty years and never took water from anyone; swore fluently in both English and Spanish, was tall and thin and about fifty years of age. A small mustache and a few strag-

gling hairs here and there over his face which he shaved at the end of each voyage. One side of his mustache was pushed somewhat higher up than the other, and whether this was caused by wiping his mouth on that side after he had ejected a pint of tobacco juice, or from habitual swearing at the crew, has never been thoroughly settled in my mind. He was rough-looking but withal, one of the best natured fellows a person would want to meet under like circumstances. His duties were many, even outside of standing perpetual watch over the crew. He would cook, chop wood, mix fancy dishes, such as ham and eggs, frijoles, tortillas, chile con carne, and mystery (this last was a dish composed of the leavings of all the above), scientifically proportioned and served warm to the crew.

The captain as general purveyor, was certainly not niggardly, for he dished out everything that he had in the most lavish manner. As we went along his eagle eye was always open for cocoanuts, oranges, or bananas, and he would run ashore and buy from the natives anything of this kind that we wished for. We acquired quite a taste for the milk of the green coconut. Our junior officer would shin up the tree like a monkey for a distance of twenty or thirty feet to the crotch of the tree where the nuts grew in a bunch and throw them down. The captain always paid for them after a few sincere remarks to the owner about what he thought of the price.

We landed a few times to look around some of the settlements and found the people good-natured and

apparently happy. The men were dressed décolleté from the feet up and the women from the head down, but the men's high up pants and the women's low down dresses were light and clean. Their houses of bamboo walls and thatch roofs were ideal for the climate. Earthen floors, cane beds, some dogs and more children, constitute a household on the banks of the Grijalva or Chiapas.

The scenery along the river bank was one continuous stretch of tropical fruit and huts. Our life aboard was also tropical, the mosquito causing the language to be torrid as the climate.

We arrived at Tipititan about six in the evening. We were to stop here all night and sleep ashore. The place consists of a church about fifty yards from the river; beyond the church a general store, a street more or less defined, running parallel with the river with houses or huts first on one side, then on the other. In all about twenty or so. The hotel is a stone and adobe affair of one large room with four doors—no windows for light, so that when you shut the door at night it becomes solitary confinement.

The owner of this place was sent for by the captain. He soon appeared, and in a few minutes had four beds placed in the room. They were cot affairs and were only brought in and put up as travel required.

The mosquito netting having been adjusted, the landlord enquired of the captain if we would sup at



his house or aboard. We were consulted and voted for shore delicacies. The native led the way down the street and we were soon in his home.

The meal was served; it consisted of frijoles and a dish that I was unable to find a name for. It tasted like cocoanut chopped up fine with hard boiled eggs, beans and river sand. Anyhow, I only tasted of it and contented myself with coffee and tortillas.

I tried to settle with our host for the meal but couldn't find out how much he wanted; he talked too rapidly for us, so we took him to the boat and the captain; he explained that the beds were fifty cents each and the meals as we liked. I asked him if four dollars would satisfy him for all and he was more than pleased. This meant two dollars American for the accommodation of four.

We wandered over to the store and the owner saw us coming, for the price of everything advanced about one hundred per cent. We ordered beer and paid his price, but that was the last transaction we had with him, for had he sold us a dozen pints at the price he wanted, he could have retired and loaned money to the balance of the natives, or taken a trip to El Salto at the head of navigation.

The night was perfect as only night can be in this region. I saw the Southern cross for the first time; watched it rise above the horizon, the stars not forming a true cross till about one or two in the morning, when it seemed to be in an upright position and was certainly a thing of beauty. About two a. m. I invaded the gloom. My friends had retired earlier.

I lit the candle and proceeded to inspect my bed by pulling the mosquito netting open. The grass matting that took the place of canvas in the cot smelled to heaven. The perspiration of twenty tribes of wandering nomads was concentrated in every mesh and fibre of its composition.

I had alcohol and camphor in a bottle which I carried for rubbing on mosquito and other bites. I poured about half the contents on the bed hoping to quiet the noisome smell. I spread the sheet-like covering over the thing, and blowing out the candle, without a thought of my soul, bestowed all my thoughts and my body to the keeping of my perfumed bed, the mosquitos and utter darkness. The fumes of the alcohol must have had a soothing effect for when I awoke it was to find the light coming in through all the doors, and Billie and George in a heated argument about the age of the church just beyond.

I hastily made my toilet: there was water and a basin but neither soap nor towel but fortunately we had these with us. When I got outside I found Dick in the mysteries of a Tipititan sawmill. It consisted of four upright posts and crossbars, on top of which rested a log. How it got there I did not find out. The log was Spanish cedar or mahogany and squared. The number of planks or boards to be sawed was marked off all the way along on top and bottom. One man stands on top and one below, and with a double-handed saw, cuts it into the required thickness. This is the method employed in all small settlements.

We unanimously agreed that breakfast should be

served on board and so informed the captain who had come up the hill to find out how we had slept. The crew packed our things to the boat and we started on our way while breakfast was being prepared by the chief engineer. We all enjoyed our morning meal and settled down to our steady employment of mosquito fighting. The New Jersey product may have been all right in its day but the finished article as we found it is none of your weakling transplanted stingers, but the real vampire of Old Mexico, still retaining the blood of the Montezumas which was mixed very liberally with ours, and while, no doubt, it should have been considered a great honor we protested against the medium through which the fusion took place. So large are the mosquitos on the river Tonola, which we branched into about noon, that we imagined we could see them wink the other eye as we made a swat at one and missed.

About four o'clock we landed at a place called Santa Cruz Bueno Vista to get eggs and give us an opportunity to stretch our legs and have a change in the brand of mosquitos. The population at this place is exactly sixty-two according to the statement made by the oldest inhabitant, and I believe him, for I think most of them were present. The children were in the majority.

A custom prevails among the natives in this part of the country of putting the children into clothes at a certain age but most of them we saw were minors, and consequently had not been dressed in their coming out raiment. We had them lined up and photograph-

ed. We also took groups of the grown-ups and were invited in and inspected their homes, which were apparently well kept. They were a happy, contented looking people, and when we returned to the boat the entire colony assembled on the bank and "adios amigos" could be heard and the waving of their hands could be seen till we turned a bend in the river. A great fandango will be held tonight in their endeavor to spend the money given to the youngsters by the Americanos.

The scenery continued good on either side of the river, the banks never rising higher than twenty feet at any point.

We met many natives in their dug-outs, and it was marvelous how they managed them and the loads they carried.

About 6:30 in the evening our attention was attracted by the yelling of a couple of natives on our starboard bow (I think that is nautically correct). They were so earnest in their yells and gestures that I came to the conclusion that something terrible had happened in the river below, but when our captain shot a few blank phrases across their bow, we brought about and after exchanging signals, the captain ordered the course changed, and in a few minutes we had swung into a little basin and a landing where we found assembled waiting for us our agent and the owner of a plantation where we were to spend the night.

After introductions we ascended the hill to a house overlooking the river. It was prettily situated and contained large comfortable furnished rooms, in-

cluding a dining room into which we were ushered, and immediately proceeded to feel very much at home in the enjoyment of what I considered the best meal we had since our advent into Mexico. The cooking was American, or more properly speaking, English, for Mr. Markley was English—decidedly so—and an excellent host.

The evening was spent very pleasantly. We all smoked, which seemed to have a discouraging effect on the mosquito delegation that waited on us in the hope of cultivating an international entente and wiping out all racial differences to the end that we might receive the same distinguished consideration as citizens of the most favored nations. This diplomatic condition of affairs lasted only while we smoked the pipe of peace, for when we retired we found that the polite mosquito delegate of the sitting room had put the whole union on to where we were supposed to sleep, and instead of proclaiming a boycott on us proceeded in initiate us into the mysteries of interdependence, or how one is dependent on the other for most of the necessities of life and all the luxuries. The ceremony was one-sided and long-winded and consisted chiefly of music and sting. The song of the mosquito attracts the attention of all the finer hearing faculties better than that of any other winged songster I can recall. With hand upraised and ears strained to the finest tension you wait, knowing that the end of the song means the beginning of operations. The sensation of a downy caress on the cheek or forehead is followed by a contraction of the muscles of the fore-arm, your

hand and face come in contact. Perhaps you have killed a mosquito; if not, the tantalizing music is resumed and the rise and fall of each note seems to leave an angered disappointment and the only word in your vocabulary available that comes to your mind, outside of unprintable matter is the word "stung." Thus the game goes on till the mosquito wearies of the game, or becomes so tired of the blood relationship that it must need take a rest itself, for as the blood of the human being is to the mosquito an intoxicant, it has by this time acquired an elegant jag. everyone becomes happy and you sink to sleep like the mosquito without reckoning on the pain that tomorrow has in store.

Next morning we were up early and had a breakfast that we had anticipated in our dreams. It was all that could be desired and we did it justice, as it would be a memory, and its equal far ahead in anticipation.

Mr. Markley showed us over his plantation the products of which were varied. Coffee, bananas, vanilla and practically all the fruits of a tropical country, but time and our mule drivers were calling, so we proceeded to the boat, and after good-bys to our host were soon on our way across the river where saddle horses and mules awaited. In the meantime, the captain was to take our good ship the "Recio" to El Salto and wait for orders.

### ON THE ROAD.

Mr. Branchley our agent assigned us to the land craft according to build. I drew a horse with a Mexican saddle into which I fitted fore and aft with such

exact nicety that once inserted the horse would have to stand on his hind legs and a pry used before we could have been separated. George got a horse with an English saddle; Dick and Billie got mules and Mexican saddles, two pack mules and two Mexican guides for servants, mounted, completed the outfit. The word was given and we were off on a twenty-five mile ride to the finca or plantation of San Carlos.

In the course of about half an hour I discovered that whoever owned the saddle that I belonged to, had artistic propensities, for the pommel was decorated with a round metal button somewhat larger than a dollar, and when trotting became the command the aforesaid metal button cultivated such an intimate association with my abdomen that I became painfully aware of its presence. I mean the metal button or on second thought, both.

We were traveling in single file as the road was only a trail. It led through forest and shade or bare spots and blazing sun, over swale land, and corduroy made passage way over the frail bridges, where one at a time was the rule, down arroyas and up hills. We finally brought up at a plantation known as the Mahaguey, where we were detained, through the desire of George's horse to explore the interior of the stable and which resulted in him getting his ankle badly sprained. We had now been out two hours and had accomplished some four miles. A drink of water and cinching more tightly our belts and the horses' girths, we plodded on our way, and in the course of an hour or so arrived at the plantation. Filidelfi, presided

over by a young American named Dussell, who gave us a hearty welcome and bottled beer, which, for the time being, made us forget our present misery and the distance ahead.

A respite of about half an hour, and I was again fitted into the saddle of which I was rapidly becoming a part. Billie's horse by this time had developed a strong desire to feed on anything in the shape of vegetation, and Dick's a disregard for the switch that was to mark their peculiarities during the whole trip. George's foot had become swollen and painful, which, added to the smallness of the stirrup, caused him all sorts of annoyance.

My horse was a good goer and my only trouble was the fit of the saddle. The sun got higher and so did the temperature. The perspiration about this time had found its way through our khaki clothing, and the beauty of the forest, if it had any, was lost in the close attention required to keep the animals on the straight and narrow path. Conversation ceased to be very edifying, and became snappy and addressed to no one in particular; still it was emphatic enough at times, especially when a horse stumbled, or an insistent mosquito presented its little bill.

A stop was made once in a while, when we would reach a shade tree after being blistered by the sun, or when something went wrong with the pack mules.

Between twelve and one we arrived at the "Iowa," another plantation managed by a Russ-German, by the name of Schmidt. We had been expected,





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and the reception we received was hearty and whole-souled.

Mr. Schmidt was an ideal host, and the luxuries spread before us for lunch were marvelous, considering the location. We had fresh mutton, potatoes, butter and cream. Then there was beer and cigars on the veranda, and to cap the climax a servant placed glasses on a small table, and wonder of wonders, started to open champagne.

Our coming and Mr. Schmidt's birthday happening on the same day seems to have been the cause of all the reckless extravagance and was not to be considered an every day occurrence, although it could happen twice a year as Mr. Schmidt explained, he having been born in Russian territory and the Russian and German calendar not working on the same schedule, gave him two birthdays in the same year. I don't remember when his next birthday occurs, but I do know that I could have wished it were tomorrow and I invited to remain and help celebrate.

This finca is in a very advanced state of cultivation. The rubber trees are many years old and producing well, and I sighed to think that ours was situated so far away, and wondered at the inconsistency of providence in not placing it somewhere in the immediate vicinity.

My reverie was rudely disturbed by the announcement that the animals were saddled and ready. I had my horse brought around where I could mount it from an old log. George had to be assisted to his saddle, his foot having become so painful that he could

scarcely walk. Billie and Dick were hypocrites enough to make believe that they felt all right but the gingerly manner in which they took their seats belied their affected indifference.

We had now some ten miles ahead of us and not a single stopping place to look forward to before we reached the San Francisco, which, we were told we would pass through some four hundred yards this side of our destination.

We thanked our host for his entertainment and never were thanks more truly spoken, for if ever there was a lifesaving station, the finca of Iowa and its genial manager filled the bill.

We trudged along much as we had done heretofore; Dick's switch having become a stick, and Billie's remarks about his mount and things in general kept pace with the torrid condition of the climate. Poor George, remembering his early bringing up, tried to suppress his feelings, except on occasions when his foot would get caught in trailing vines or brush; then nature would assert itself, and George would have been sent home from his Sunday school had he used the same kind of language to his teacher that he did to his horse. It is unnecessary to record the fact that I suffered in silence, remembering the uncertainty of life and the belief in a great hereafter—but why go through it all over again. Everything has an end, although at times ours seemed more certain than the journey.

In the course of time, about seven o'clock in the evening, we entered a clearing: then the rubber trees,

and soon brought up at the headquarters of the plantation San Francisco, beyond which could be seen our own headquarters. But we must rest and get refreshed before attempting even the short distance that intervened, as the sight of a human habitation was too much to pass. The manager was there to welcome us; his men took charge of our horses and traps after we had separated ourselves from the saddle, and I must say I never was so intimately associated with one before and never so glad to dissolve partnership. When I alighted or rather when I slid down, I held onto the horse for a minute, as my legs could scarcely support my body. I then hobbled to a seat and prayed for the privilege of standing. I lay down at full length on my back, but was reminded in spots of the saddle. I turned over and was then reminded of the pommel. I finally got on my feet and got my legs in motion, and after taking a few turns around the veranda, was able to ask for a glass of water.

This practically describes the feeling of the whole party with the exception of Mr. Branchley, who is used to that sort of thing. George, perhaps, suffered more than any one else and had to be carried to a seat, his foot having become so swollen and painful that he could not put it on the ground without great pain. We took off his shoe and bandaged him as best we could, and left him there for the night as it was impossible for him to go even the short distance to our headquarters. We sent our horses ahead and walked, as the thoughts of the saddle conjured up unpleasant feelings.

### THE FINCA.

Our place, or as it is known, the "St. Carlos" headquarters, is about three hundred yards from that of the San Francisco, down hill half way and up hill the balance. The house itself is picturesque, and I would let it go at that, but candor compels me to rob it of some of its glory. It sits or stands on a little knoll facing North; on the South is the forest; on the East, the Rio Meshole and the plantation; the West the space separating us from our neighbor. The house has two front rooms, one on either side of the hall, which leads into one large room or back porch, as it is open on the side, at the West end of which is the fire place, the usual Mexican affair about two feet six inches from the floor of stones and dirt, flat on top, and three or four feet square. The fire is built either of wood or charcoal, depending on which you have. It was wood in this case.

Pots and pans are propped up on stones. There is no flue, the smoke finding its way anywhere the wind blows it; and by the way, our fireplace was about as respectable as the average, for Mexico has the distinction of not having a chimney in the country, with the single exception of the town of Real del Monte.

Our house had walls of bamboo about ten feet high and from one to two inches thick. The air had free access between the bamboo poles which were laced together with some vegetable fibre. At the top was a frame-work of wood to which the outside walls were attached. The roof was very steep in pitch and thatched with the leaf of the guano plant, and

over a foot thick. It ran down on a light frame-work over what was intended to be a veranda some day, but which at present was the ground, enclosed by a bamboo fence.

The furniture had better be left to the imagination. Suffice it to say that at meal time we had sufficient dishes and plates for the menu and at night a cot each in which to sleep, but should one of the family of cats get after any of the colony of rats in the roof, then all was not peace and sleep. This happened on our first night.

Dick and I had retired and thought when we closed the mosquito netting which canopied the cots that it would require Gabriel's trumpet to wake us when once asleep. Mr. Branchley occupied the room across the hall and had been carrying on a conversation with us while we were preparing to retire. A lull in the conversation was followed by a noise of something falling, accompanied by squealing, and most unearthly yelling on the part of Branchley. We thought he had been attacked by some wild animal or reptile and hastened to his room to find a large cat with a rat about half as big as itself, and at first it was impossible to tell which one had the other. The cat was growling, if a cat can growl and the rat was squealing. The question of possession was soon settled when the cat made a spring up one of the posts of the house with the rat and disappeared in the thatch of the roof. When Branchley regained his composure, he explained that just as he was about to get into bed the rat jumped from the roof on top of his mosquito canopy, and from

there to his shoulder, the cat following from the roof taking the same course and catching the rat in the far corner of the room.

After the excitement had somewhat abated we returned to our room, and wished that the canopy covering our beds had been made stronger; but, as the floor was about as dangerous, we made the best of it and again crawled into bed.

The following morning found us, if possible, more tired and sore, but we were scheduled to look over part of the plantation, so we dressed and after making breakfast on eggs and tortillas, went over to find out how George was getting along, and also to pick up Billie who had remained to take care of him. We found George not able to get up, and Billie, like ourselves, sore in mind, body and estate, but off we started, leaving George in the care of some of the natives.

We tramped up hill and down, through underbrush—sometimes on a trail, but most of the time by direction. We visited the trees of different growth, the places cleared for planting and places to be cleared, till the sun became so hot that we were compelled to make for the headquarters, where we arrived more dead than alive, our interest in rubber for the time being having oozed out of us at every pore of our bodies.

We rested the remainder of the day and in the evening were so far recovered that we listened to Branchley, telling us how it happened, and thereby gained a fund of information on the cultivation of rubber.



## RUBBER.

It seems that rubber was first brought to notice something over five hundred years ago by one Herrera who noticed that the natives of Hayti played a game with rubber balls made from the gum of a tree; then it is noticed in Mexico in the 17th century, where the natives collected the milk-like gum and smeared it on the body and rubbed it off when dry. Since then it has been found in many countries in a belt extending some 500 miles on either side of the equator.

The 19th century, however, saw the first real interest in the manufacture of the product of the rubber tree and the demand so great that up to the present time the supply has never equalled the demand. This condition of affairs is responsible for the planting of the trees in countries where soil and climatic conditions show the best result. The Para rubber of South America has always been considered the best. Central America sends a good quality from Guatemala and the South of Mexico has lately shown that an excellent article is cultivated over a wide territory in that country.

The Mexican rubber tree is grown from a seed of small oblong shape planted in the ground about two inches deep and ten feet apart, and attains commercial growth in from five to seven years, depending on location. The principal labor in caring for the trees between the planting and tapping time consists of keeping down the undergrowth for the first two years

and preventing creeping vines from entwining themselves around the young plant and choking it.

Sometimes a nursery is planted and after one or more years the young tree is transplanted, but it seems the seed gives the best results, as quite a loss is sustained through transplanting.

The Mexican variety does not grow as large as the Para, but is still a good size, running from eight inches to one or two feet in diameter, and from twenty to fifty feet high. The leaf is large, tapering at both ends, from five to seven inches across at the widest and from twelve to eighteen inches long.

When the tree is ready for tapping a knife with an adjustable tongue or blade regulated by a screw, is set for the depth of cut required; the tapper then proceeds to make one long cut or score straight down the tree from below the branches to within a short distance of the ground. He then cuts from the back of the tree a groove at an angle of about forty-five degrees and ending in the perpendicular cut, continuing these cuts at a distance of about eight inches. This operation is repeated on the other side, the scorings on the back of the tree overlapping each other about an inch or so. The cut or score is about a quarter of an inch wide and the depth according to the thickness of the bark.

A tree can be injured and the rubber spoiled in quality by wrong tapping, the milk or rubber flow comes from under the first bark, and should the second or delicate covering of the tree be penetrated a black gum is exuded that spoils the rubber and saps

the life of the tree. A cup is adjusted to the bottom of the upright cut for the reception of the milk. When the flow has ceased, the rubber that has hardened in the cut is peeled off and this is the end of its yielding for six months. The first year's tapping will give an average of four ounces per tree; the second year's tapping, about a pound; the third, three-quarters, and the fourth and subsequent years, one pound, or more, and the life of its productiveness has not yet been determined.

Rubber cultivation, like gold-mining, has its little difficulties. The high grader of the gold mine has his counterpart in the night prowler of the rubber plantation, for with rubber at the present market value, the robbing of the cups would be a profitable business, so that this crime on a plantation is looked upon as highway robbery.

### TO PALENQUE.

The following day we completed our inspection of the finca, with more interest and greater effort. We rested up another day before getting ready for our start to the ruins of Palenque. We must be growing stale or something, for the mosquitos did not pay the same attention to us last night that they have done heretofore.

Breakfast was ready when we were, and after partaking plentifully of the choicest dishes the plantation afforded, we made a start. Our animals were waiting across the river and we were ferried over in a dug-out. I was pleased to find that my horse was

decorated with an English saddle. It was George's, whose sprained ankle prevented him accompanying us. I was very sorry for George but the thought of my luck in getting his saddle and escaping the tortures I had undergone in the Mexican affair into which I had formerly been fitted, reconciled me somewhat to the condition of affairs and the pain that he must necessarily endure.

The distance to the village of Palenque was somewhat over twenty miles, and about nine miles farther to the ruins. The road or trail might be a continuation of our last as far as direction and difficulties were concerned. The trail had been overgrown at places and had to be cleared away by the machettes of the Mozos, and a person not seeing it, would scarcely credit the wonderfully rapid growth of forest or jungle. This trail had not been used for a few months and we found obstructions across our path consisting of matted and twisted rope-like vines around branches of trees in such a net-work that I would not have credited that a trail could be found again by cutting and slashing through the growth for the distance of a few yards.

The jungle, to a person without the necessary and ever-present Mexican side-arm, would be impenetrable and the making of a trail like the present one, through this country, is far from being child's play. This machette is a very useful tool or weapon, just as necessity requires. It is sword-like but somewhat heavier. It will cut down a small tree or a man. It will clear the entangling undergrowth, chop kindling

wood for a fire, cut bacon or tap a rubber tree. A native in the tropics without it would be **almost** as useless as if he were separated from his cigarette, and without a cigarette a Mexican is bereft of all interest in existence—present or future.

Let me see. I am wandering somewhat in my record but this digression was caused by an obstruction in our path, and it was while observing the gentleman under consideration clearing the way that the thoughts above recorded presented themselves. The thought and the clearing came to an end at the same time and we journeyed along fairly well until going over an old bridge, single file, my horse broke through with his front feet, throwing me off. I landed—if that language can be used for falling on the bridge. I lit on my side and rolled out of the way, so that the horse in his struggles to get out of the hole, would not try to reverse the order of things by getting on me. Fortunately neither of us were seriously injured, and we resumed our relative positions after a physical examination by the entire party.

We had trudged along for some hours, when we were met by a Mr. Plant, manager of the San Leandro Finca. He turned back with us and we spent a pleasant half hour at his place. His wife and family are with him, and they had quite a collection of tropical birds, some of them larger than parrots and of beautiful plumage. Mrs. Plant would have made lunch for us but the time could not be spared, so we com-

promised by borrowing a loaf of bread and two tins of canned meat of some kind.

This place is in an advanced state of cultivation and results in the rubber crop were anticipated this season, as the trees in many parts of the plantation had attained the required age and growth. Our horses were made ready and we again took up the white man's burden—or the horses did. I began to feel the effects of my fall by a painful reminder in my left side, but I kept up with the procession; indeed, sometimes ahead of it, for by this time Dick had used up three saplings on his horse without getting any response so far as increased speed was concerned and had borrowed one of Branchley's spurs, hoping by its application to impress the animal with the necessity of getting a move on. Billie's horse still continued its browsing tactics and kept behind Dick's, knowing that it would escape all the blame, and incidentally acquire a meal through its many pick-ups along the route, but Billie was not happy. The stirrup was too small for his large boot and the saddle was disagreeable in places. The unexpected stops of his mount and its desire to resume only when it had consumed all the available feed in sight, put him in no enviable mood. The horse evidently did not understand English; at least, as Billie handed it out, and there seemed to be established between them a mutual indifference for the comfort and well-being of each other.

The pack mules and their drivers seemed to get along all right, but one of the mules had the feeding propensities of Billie's horse and would sometimes get

off the trail for a choice bite of some succulent foliage and when reminded to move on would bump against a tree and trot along with perfect indifference. So indifferent did it become that on one occasion it caused trouble by trying to get between two trees and spilling its pack, thereby endangering our borrowed loaf of bread.

This nearly catastrophe reminded us that we had better find a place suitable for dividing the food stuff. We soon came to a long bridge over a river. We crossed and tying the horses in the shade sought shelter under the bridge close to the water and proceeded to divide up the staff of life and investigate the contents of the can the good lady had so kindly supplied us with. Many opinions were expressed as to what it was, but I have never found out whether it was veal, beef, pork or chicken, each one having his own opinion on the question; but it was agreed that whatever it might be it was good, and we all enjoyed it accordingly. We saved about half of the loaf for future reference and one can of the—whatever it was—as we were not sure about our next hotel.

When we were preparing to start, we found that a thunder storm was threatening. Clouds had formed behind us, distant thunder could be heard and the lightning began to play, but still we were in good, but very heavy weather. We tried to move more rapidly in the hopes of escaping the storm.

Our trail entered a prairie-like country or grazing land, about the only open country we had seen. There must have been about three or four miles of this

character of country and no evidence of it having been cleared by fire or machette.

Branchley, Dick and I outdistanced the others on account of our mounts, some unforeseen reason having inspired Dick's horse to keep in the running. I think it must have been the spur that had been transferred to his left foot; anyhow, the storm changed from behind us to the right, and back and forth, but getting closer and closer all the time. Our prairie land came to an end and we entered the jungle again. Soon another clearing, and again forest. We waited for some little time for the rear guard but not seeing them pushed on. We had crossed the prairie land by following a line of telegraph or telephone poles, believing that we could not go wrong in doing so, but after a mile or so of forest we emerged again in a clearing and straight ahead of us was a hacienda.

We rode up to the gate and found a gentleman on the porch of the house. He addressed us in English, and when we inquired the way to Palenque he informed us that we would have to go back through the woods for half a mile; then turn to the left, cross an arroyo and we would be right at the village of Palenque.

We turned back and wended our way toward the storm that had been following us, and on emerging from the woods, ran right into the rain, and such rain; one minute wet us so thoroughly that it became a matter of indifference how long it rained after.

We had ponchos, but they were on the pack



mules, and, the drivers knowing the way, had probably taken the right trail; at all events, they were not with us, so we made the best of it and trotted along till we found the arroyo, crossing it we reached the village in about ten minutes, and found the balance of our party under the shelter of an old barn, waiting our arrival.

We inquired at a general store as to hotel accommodations, and learned that there was no regular hotel, but that Mr. Somebody on the plaza took in any stranger that came along and wanted a night's lodging. We were made welcome, Branchley negotiating for the party as he spoke the language.

Our horses were taken care of by the drivers, and we by the hostess, in the absence of her father, who, it developed was the government care taker of the ruins.

Our clothing, thoroughly soaked, and not a change of raiment compelled us to let them dry on our bodies which was accomplished without any bad results.

The rain and thunder seemed determined to give us a truly tropical welcome and it was no dry greeting. I have seen rain, and heard of cloud bursts but the present was the greatest continuous downpour that I ever witnessed, and it was no matinee, for, though the thunder and lightning seemed to have other engagements, the rain had taken a liking to our company and kept it up during the night and we were informed that six inches of rain was the record for the twelve hours following our arrival.

It was noon the day following before we had an

opportunity of looking over the village, and then, only between showers, still it didn't take long to see all that was on exhibition.

The shed, under which we found our party yesterday, was the corner, and most of one side of the plaza. The general store in the next angle, and in the center but farther up the hill (for the plaza was not level) stood the village church. The schoolhouse occupied another side all to itself, and the lower end was where the main street began or ended. This with its one story houses on either side.

The post office was located on this street and the post man arrived on horseback while we were there, but where he came from or where he went to, I did not ascertain.

The church was locked up, but we were interested in two tablets of stone built into the front walls on either side of the door. They were from the ruins, and covered with curious markings and figures. These tablets have been written about and described by Stevens Prescott and others. Here is one description by Senor Don Ramon:

"In the facade of the building, on either side of the entrance, is a strange figure—one has a headdress of leaves and flowers and has a trumpet, from which exudes flames and smoke, from the shoulders hangs a tiger skin, adorned with a snake, a bird and other devices with bracelets on the arms and feet. The other figure has a complicated adornment of the head composed of plumes, with the sacred bird El Gavilan, the sparrow hawk holding a fish in its beak. The



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other adornments are a tigers' head and a grotesque figure with other gravings. Over both figures are various hieroglyphies."

These tablets had been lying around the village before they found a resting place in the front of the church.

The population of Palenque is about one thousand, and that is being liberal.

There are no buildings of marked age or appearance and it is strange that some enterprising individual has not, ere this, builded a hotel for the comfort of even the few who go out of their way to visit the very much underestimated ruins of Palenque.

The weather conditions did not improve much but we made up our minds to start the following day rain or shine, and it did both, but agreeable to our determination, we set forth about nine a. m. taking in addition to our two native servants, a young boy from the house in which we stopped as a guide.

The trail or road was through a forest for nine miles, the trees were of larger growth than any we had seen in the country heretofore.

The ground was slippery from the rain and the country though level in the main, had many places of very steep grade, and riding up or down stairs in comparison would seem the merest child's play.

On going down such grades to the rivers, the horse would brace himself and literally slide down, and on ascending the opposite bank after fording the stream, we braced ourselves by taking hold of the horses' mane, leaning on his neck and urging him by

switch or spur to mount the grade. It might seem strange that in these places we did not dismount, but the ground was in such condition that walking was almost out of the question. The immediate approach to the ruins is the steepest ascent, and as the path was rocky we did dismount, and after an effort gained the summit, and were in sight of a small settlement of Indians who are permitted to cultivate the clearing on the river bank close to the ruins. These Indians are under the direction of the care taker, but neither care taker nor Indians took the slightest interest in our visit.

### THE RUINS.

Following through the settlement, the first thing that attracted our attention was the outlet of an aqueduct, about ten feet wide and below the ground level; the masonry could be seen some distance on either side before we arrived at the place where it was covered over. A volume of water like a river (in fact it was a river) flowed from somewhere in the ground but how far the masonry work extended or where the water came from, has not yet been determined. The water was clear and cold, though the day was exceedingly close and rainy, yet no evidence of muddiness from the previous day's rain was in the water.

A hundred yards farther along was the first of the ruins, but we did not devote much time to it, as it was pretty badly demolished.

A somewhat winding path brought us in full view of a number of buildings, each one occupying a

hill or pyramid of its own. The guide led us to what was known as "The Palace." We paused to take a general look at it before climbing up to inspect the interior. The hill, or mound on which it stands was some fifty or sixty feet high and looked as if it might have been made with sloping sides of rock or earth. There must have been steps up the sides of the building sometime but we failed to find them and so clambered up the loose rock and into the building. We wandered all over it from basement to roof. The basement consists of passageways reached by a half closed entrance from the ground floor. These passageways were of different sizes, some about three feet wide and six feet in the clear and one five or six feet wide and the same head room. The smaller passages ran at right angles to the large one. Carvings in these passages were plentiful. At the end of the largest one a slab of stone about eighteen inches above the floor and four feet by six feet on top, looked as if it might have been a couch or table for prisoner or recluse. Bats swarmed these corridors, and we ran the risk of being struck by them as they flew by, or getting our candles put out by their wings. The main floor only suggests what the building may have been. There remains a corridor about eight feet wide, that I suppose ran the whole length of the building. The outer walls of this corridor has openings or arch-ways ten feet wide, built on piers eight feet wide and four feet thick. The inner wall of this corridor was mostly solid, being broken only by openings on an inner corridor or an altar or shrine. The roof of the cor-

ridor was formed by corbeling the flat stones a few inches each course on either side of the walls until they reached within about six inches of meeting, then a flat stone was laid across overlapping about six inches. The corbel on the outside of the building acted as a cornice. The stones seemed to be irregular in thickness, some only two inches and others four, six or eight, and solid without any apparent cleavage. It probably had been formed by irregular deposits, for its bed surface was as smooth as if cut with a knife. It was a light fawn in color, and looked as though it might stand for very delicate carving. About a dozen rooms, some fair sized and other cell-like places occupied part of the main floor.

On the northeast side of the corridor an opening led to an inner passage, across which could be seen a large court that appeared to be about one hundred feet square. The floor of this court was on the level of that of the vaults and was reached by a flight of five stone steps, each step fifteen inches rise, twelve inch tread and thirty feet long. On the opposite side of the court a second flight of steps, though not so wide, led into another corridor. On either side of the main steps- large slabs of stone were erected along the wall on the rake of the stairs, and on these slabs were carved figures of men and hieroglyphics. This court may have been used as a bath or arena; the steps were surely never built for getting in and out of the court only, but rather, I imagine, for people to sit or stand on, for the purpose of watching whatever was taking place below. The opposite wall as high as the



steps, was covered with carved tablets, but I could see no evidence of there ever having been a roof on this part of the building. Across a corridor at the top of the opposite flight of steps, is another court, but not so large. A third, from which rose a tower, and on the roof adjoining this third court a tree of immense size is growing; its roots imbedded in the accumulation of rocks and dirt of centuries and as if not satisfied with the stability of the roof for its roots it has sent them down the walls alongside of an opening which it spanned and buried them solidly in the earth below.

A kind of sanctum sanctorum faces on the main corridor. It is eight feet by six feet with a four-foot opening. The walls are carved with curious markings, and at either side, though not connected, is a cell-like room. This altar room or whatever it may have been, faces the open space below and could be seen by the people on the porch or the grounds and may have been a place of royal station. This building is without arch, in fact there is not an arch in any of the buildings, the openings being covered over either by corbel or lintel. The corbels and walls are covered with a stucco or plaster and presented a fairly smooth surface. We could have devoted more time to this building but we were anxious to visit some of the others.

Directly east, and about one hundred and fifty yards distant from the porch where we entered, and on top of a hill stood another but smaller temple and we took advantage of a lull in the rain to make our way

across. This building shows more clearly than the others its general outlines. It was of a different style, being two stories high, the openings below being formed by corbeling. The upper story not occupying so much space as the ground floor, but resting on inner walls and presenting a more artistic effect. It may have been for the female portion of the family, if females ever lived there or it may have been for a watch tower. The lower story was approached from the northwest by climbing up over rocks and slippery earth. The entrance faced west and consisted of a corridor in the inner wall of which was a shrine or altar, and on the walls, where not broken were tablets covered with markings. A vault or basement could be seen, but we did not go below.

The same general conditions were found as in the one just left. We visited others, each one occupying its own eminence and presenting a difference in design, though preserving the same general appearance. One, however, attracted our attention for many reasons. First because it was on the highest hill and again because we could see a peculiarity in the construction of the front wall, and last because a corduroy skid or stairway of timber had been built recently from the level of the valley to the front of the ruin on top of the hill for the purpose of removing the remainder of the celebrated Palenque cross, the other part of it being at present in the museum in the City of Mexico.

Well, we climbed up the skid-way and reached the hill top. A veranda or corridor was the first place

we entered and the outer wall attracted our attention. It was started with a corbel both inside and out and when it got story high it met the inner wall corbel and formed an arch, and the outside had such a projection that it made a water shed and sloped back roof-like to the upper story or stories. The outer walls at the top of the first story, had a roof of stone with a pitch like a mansard, though perhaps not so steep. The upper stories rising from the back of the mansard and resting on interior walls. The upper structure seemed of a ginger bread character and looked like a number of miniature stories, what they could have been used for I didn't even try to imagine.

The altar or shrine was in evidence but this building's chief interest lay in the stone on which with other figures and characters was carved the now wonderful Palenque cross.

Hunger admonished us that the living present should receive some consideration, and we immediately proceeded to regale the inner man on whatever the servants had the forethought to provide.

Our observations after this were of a general character and the hour admonished us to prepare for the return trip.

Our visit was more than satisfactory from a tourist point of view and we marveled that so few people find their way to this wonderful place.

Less has been written about Palenque than any other ruins that I know of, yet in a way Palenque has been known of since 1750, when some Spaniards stumbled across the ruins or were shown them by the

Indians. News of the discovery was conveyed to Spain and the ruins were explored by order of the king in 1787. A further exploration was conducted in 1807, by order of Charles IV. In 1839 John L. Stephens visited the ruins and explored them more systematically than the others, and his conclusions were that if a like discovery had been made at that time in Italy, Greece, Egypt or Asia within reach of European travel it would have created an interest not inferior to the discovery of Herculanaeum or Pompeii or the ruins of Paestum. Mr. Stephens states that the natives aver that the ruins cover a space of sixty miles and that some writers have said that the ancient city was ten times larger than New York City, but he also adds that the natives know nothing about it and the strangers less, because the surface of the earth is covered by an impenetrable forest compared to which our wildest woodland is an open field and that one might pass within a hundred feet of the greatest of temples and not find it, consequently the extent is unknown to anyone, as no exploration has ever been made.

The condition of the forest above noted is true, as far as we know, and it would be a large undertaking to ascertain the extent of this forgotten city if city it was.

The Mexican government is apparently taking some interest in it, as evidenced by the visit of the minister of education, and I am sure, that never before were visitors permitted to see the ruins under such favorable conditions as we were, the forest in the immediate neighborhood having been cut down and the

rooms in many of the ruins dug out for that official inspection.

Some day the clearing up of the question of extent and age will be taken up and if one may judge from what little there is exposed a wonderful revelation is in store for the civilized world to marvel at.

It is strange that nothing is known of the builders though they have left their writings on the stones and we can but hope that the future will in this instance be able to unfold the past.

We left the ruins of Palenque as we found them, but the memories and thoughts inspired by the visit will stay with us with ever recurring interest and speculation.

The trip back to the village was made mostly in the rain, but as we had our ponches or rain coats we did not mind it much. And by the way, a poncho is an oil cloth made with a hole in the center large enough to pass over the head and button up close under the chin. It hangs down below the knees, and when on horse back covers the legs as well as the body.

We arrived very tired as the day was ending in the promise of a thoroughly wet night.

The following morning found us up early but not bright and early, as we were anything but bright.

We had decided to make a start back for the finca, and to that end had engaged the services of an Indian guide to show us another way out, in order

to avoid bridges which we were afraid might be washed away.

Before breakfast I happened to pass through the dining room and noticed our young lady hostess breaking the soft boiled eggs into a glass, and I stopped short when I noticed how she did it. She cracked the egg on the top of the glass and allowed the yolk to drop inside, then with her thumb nail she scooped out the remaining part of the white into the glass. About that time I decided that I wanted my eggs hard boiled and so informed her and had two sent back for further boiling or dipping, for they don't boil, but dip the eggs in boiling water. And when mine were thought to be sufficiently cooked, I broke them without the aid of the young lady's thumb.

Dick questioned me about the eggs after breakfast, and when I told him the only comment he made was to congratulate himself on having his eggs prepared in the truly Mexican style.

We started about nine, and our guide led us through the forest. There may have been a trail before the rain, but if so no evidence of it remained, for we waded through water up to the horses' knees.

We traveled of necessity single file and in close order, as the branches from above or below had to be held back by the one ahead and caught by the one following. Our progress during this part of the journey was tiresome and not altogether without risk, but in the course of time we emerged and got into clearer

territory, and about noon arrived at the abode of the guide, where we halted for lunch.

His ranch or whatever else he called it, contained something over three hundred acres, but it was not all cultivated by any means. Still he got along in his way and managed to raise sufficient fruit and vegetables to support a large family of children and the necessary number of cattle and dogs. He also had quite a patch of tobacco growing, and in that and a half American grandson he lavished his greatest attention. He showed us his tobacco patch with pride and introduced his grandson with much show of affection.

The other members of the family were ignored. They were there to be seen but that was enough, and they seemed to understand it that way.

After lunch our guide continued with us until we were out of the woods, so to speak, and it was decided that the way was clear and by following the trail we could hardly go wrong. It was well that the "hardly" had been inserted about going wrong, for though our *mozos* professed to know the way ahead, we surely got lost. At the end of a three hours' journey came the end of the trail, in a clearing or rather a place where the trees and underbrush had been cut down. This clearing appeared to be about half a mile square. We left our horses in charge of the natives and separated, going to different parts of the clearing in an endeavor to find a trail. We spent an hour in this very tiresome business and Branchley was the fortunate one to find it at the extreme end of

the patch. This meant a hard job getting the horses through, as the brush and down timber presented quite an obstruction to our progress, but we finally made it without mishap and from there on the path was known to our people. We arrived at the finca of San Francisco to find that the low land between it and our headquarters had become a lake through the overflowing of the river. The horses had to swim across and we were ferried over in the dug-out that had taken us across the river on our departure.

It was not much of a place to call home, but we were glad to get there, and after dinner retired, as we were to be on the road again in the morning for El Salto and our sixteen-horse power river boat.

The following morning we had to divide our party. George was not sufficiently recovered to ride and Billie had acquired such an antipathy to both his horse and saddle that he agreed to accompany George down the river in the canoe.

Branchley, Dick and myself trusted to the uncertainty of a new made trail for another twenty-five mile jungle ride.

We first saw the river voyagers off and then began the worst days ride we had since we started on the trip.

As I look back on it the thoughts are so unpleasant that I will pass over it briefly, merely mentioning the fact that Dick's horse for over twenty miles could hardly be induced to travel beyond the pace of the proverbial snail, and the last few miles could hardly be restrained, when it found itself in known territory,



as it belonged to El Salto and its desire to get home was so great that many times Diek had narrow escapes from branches or low bridges as they are called.

The trail led over the most uneven country, that it could be the fate of saddle-tired amateur jockeys to encounter.

Climbing up steep grades on the back of the animal where climbing on foot would have been considered hazardous, and going down hill where the stirrups pointed to the horses head and the riders head about on a line with the horses tail, over rocky formation for quite a distance, where nature had not been particular about rubbing down the jagged surface. All this and then some, but why think it all over again.

We arrived at El Salto to find our friends ahead of us some hours, but also with a story to tell.

Their canoe was carried down the Rio Meehel at quite a speed, the river having risen many feet. They were hung up on a tree at one point, and run ashore at many others where the river turned or where logs had gorged it. They were all but spilled a number of times, and George and Billie both agreed that if they ever were shanghaied, they hoped they would not be shipped to sail on the Rio Meehel in a dug-out.

The horses and mules were delivered to their owner who seemed to have an interest in everything in town.

El Salto is a town of one thousand population, at the head of navigation on the Tulija river. One street is fronting on the water, but the principal business

houses are on a street running at right angles from the river.

The gentleman from whom our horses had been hired, owned a general store. He also conducted a hotel and the post office, cashed checks of all the business men for miles around, bought and sold any kind of product from coffee to cattle, ran a liquor store and finally was a friend of the Jefe politico, an official who is both judge and jury in all matters short of murder.

We had the pleasure of meeting and dining with these gentlemen, and found them both very agreeable persons.

The captain of our good ship the Recrio, soon learned of our arrival and reported for instructions.

We decided to start that evening before sun down, and after rounding up the crew and getting everything in ship shape, the captain again appeared with the whole crew and took our belongings aboard.

We said adios to the representatives of the commercial and judicial interests of El Salto and started on our way down the stream.

The night was clear but without moonlight. The captain was not much in favor of running at night as snags were dangerous and the river rapid, but we were anxious to get along, and so he took a chance.

After dinner I climbed on top of the engine house, as the stars were beautiful and the mosquitos below very annoying. I made myself as comfortable as possible by using some old canvas to keep me from rolling off into the river, and making a pillow out of a

bucket rack. I must have dozed off to sleep, for about nine o'clock I felt a jar and sure enough we had run into one of the snags the captain had dreaded. The sudden stop almost threw me overboard, and from below came a babel of tongues, the captain swearing at the crew in Spanish for getting snagged and damning his luck in English for attempting to run at night against his better judgment, and a sharp, triumphant "I told you so" to Billie, who immediately hoisted his admiral's flag and assuming command, ordered all hands forward so that the weight in the bow might slide the boat over the obstruction. The order was obeyed and the result was satisfactory, as the boat slid off after wavering some as to whether she would keel over or do as she was expected. Then the captain came to the conclusion that we were lost, as no shore was in sight and the snag was not charted, so after the crew had been sworn at some more, the captain ordered them to send up signals of distress, which they did by shouting, alternately, "Amigos." This continued for a minute or so when a voice from somewhere answered. Then an animated conversation followed at the end of which the captain informed us that we were in a lagoon, and that the owner of the voice had gone to get his boat and come aboard as pilot. Pending the coming of the rescue party a hurried examination of the boat was made by Billie, who being a ship designer and builder was qualified for the inspection. The well was sounded and found dry; the sides were examined and pronounced intact; the rudder had passed safely over the snag and the en-

gine responded when tried. By this time the boat was heard coming with our friend who was soon on board directing which way to steer.

It seems that our misfortune was caused by the overflow of the river and the helmsman had steered through an opening in the bank and lost us in the lagoon.

We were soon again in the river and the pilot remained with us long enough to have something to eat and inform the captain of his latitude and longitude.

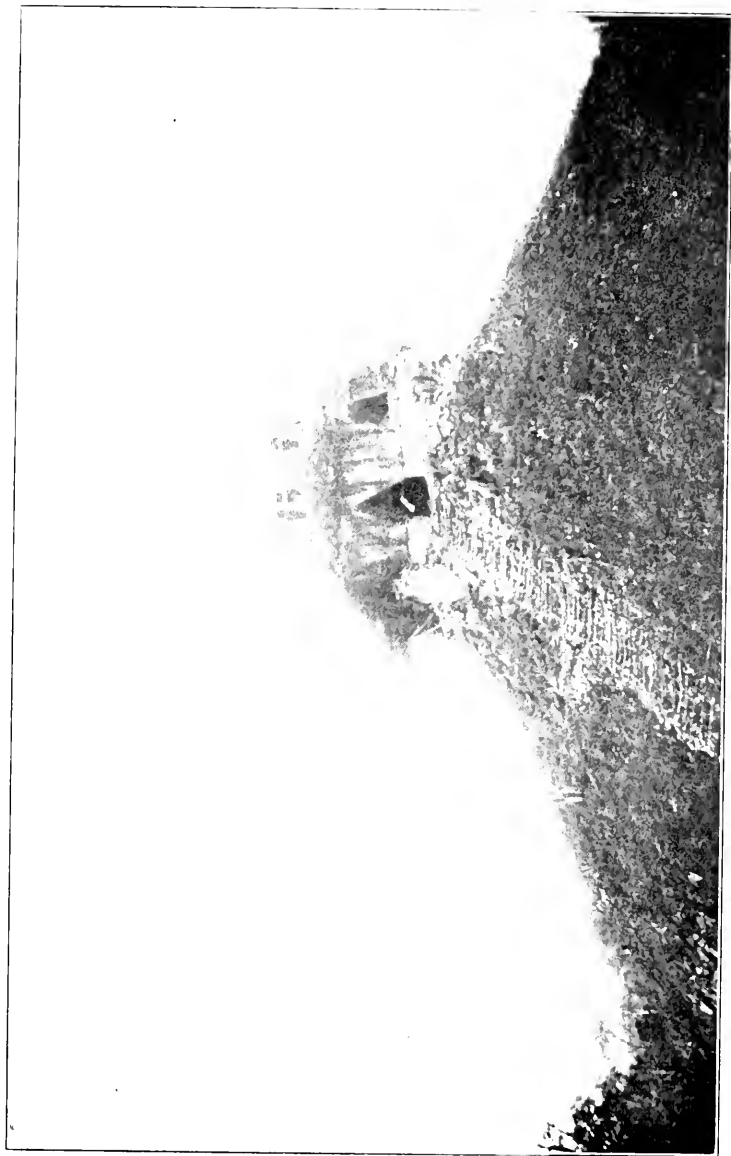
On consulting the chart we found ourselves close to Tipititan, which we soon reached and where by mutual agreement we stopped for the night.

The crew got the owner of the dungeon hotel out of bed, and he went through the performance of setting up cots for us as on the former occasion.

The night was beautiful and the inside of the room anything but inviting, so after the others had retired I wandered up and down between the church and the sleeping place until about two in the morning, enjoying the beauty of the southern cross, as on our former stopping at Tipititan.

We were aroused in the morning by the captain pounding on one of the doors and informing us that breakfast was ready.

A hurried toilet and we were soon on board and on our way down the stream. The river was high and the current rapid so we made good time and without mishap arrived at Frontera in the afternoon and were





soon on the mental register of our genial host Senor Hop Wah at the Grand Hotel.

We met our Pittsburg friends, who had been up the country looking over some oil land and who imparted to us the cheerful information that we had just missed a boat for Vera Cruz and would be compelled to wait a few days for the next sailing. This was discouraging, to say the least, but we were somewhat consoled later in the evening when we learned that a boat would sail the following evening for San Juan Bautista, the capital of the state of Tobasco, and further that a bull fight was to take place on Sunday.

We made up our minds to take the trip as it would relieve the monotony.

The weather in Frontera was getting warmer since our last visit and the mosquitos seemed to recognize us and gave us the glad hand, so to speak. And that reminds me that the mosquitos aforesaid were the cause of our friend George having to set up the drinks that evening.

We were seated at a table on the street with our Pittsburg friends and the captain having refreshments and talking over our trip. The mosquitos were very attentive, perhaps hoping to get some pointers about the habits and customs of their relatives up the country, one especially large fellow having selected George as its prize: had touched him on the back of hand a number of times. George had made as many ineffectual attempts to annihilate his tormentor, and becoming exasperated beyond his usual placid condition made three rapid slaps on the back of his hand.

The mosquito disappeared but the waiter appeared instead, as waiters in Mexico are summoned by three claps of the hand. We all saw where George was the victim doubly by losing his mosquito and calling the waiter. He made good, however, and we ordered a double ration and he paid for the score.

The night was extremely close, the exertion of even sitting in a chair was tiring, and the perspiration fairly dropped from the end of our fingers.

The captain consoled us by recalling nights in Frontera, when a night like the present one called for overcoats and zerappas; nights so warm that the mosquitos were forced to crawl on the streets and had to bite you through the soles of your shoes. In fact so hot became the captain's stories that we were obliged to hand out a few of our own about the glorious climate of California and Arizona, and Billie told about the dead soldier from Yuma, who in response to the inquiry of his Satanic Majesty if it was hot enough for him, requested permission to return for his blankets.

The captain bethought him that he was behind in his dues in the Ananias Club and bade us good-night.

The shower bath at the Grand Hotel worked overtime that night before we retired, and after the shower bath ceased to work the mosquitoes went on watch and enlivened the remaining hours by singing "We won't go home till morning."

For breakfast Dick had ordered ham and eggs and got Hop to understand by sign language that he wanted them turned over. Hop got the idea firmly



fixed in his mind and repeated "turn him over" so often that when Billie ordered oatmeal and George wanted fruit Hop Wah looking very wise repeated "turn him over," but whether he knew a little more English than he pretended to I don't know, but he generally furnished whatever we wanted and was altogether a good fellow.

We procured tickets for the steamer to San Juan and embarked at six o'clock Saturday afternoon.

The crew were all Mexican except the captain, who was a fierce looking sea dog of some Central American country.

We had a reasonably good cabin with four berths, but spent most of the time on deck.

The stewards were obliging fellows and we got along very nicely. We arrived the following morning and by arrangement were taken to a hotel where we had a very fair meal, secured rooms for the night, and proceeded to look the town over.

### **SAN JUAN BEAUTISTA.**

San Juan Bautista is a town of about thirteen thousand population. The capital of the state of Tobasco; a wide awake place with fairly good streets and stores; is about fifty feet above sea level; has a good producing country back of it and a chance for shipping that makes it one of the desirable business centers of the State.

We inquired about the bull fight and where it was

to be and were informed that it was postponed, but a cock fight would take place in the afternoon.

We were just as well pleased, and so when the appointed time arrived we were conducted to a place a short distance from the business center: paid admission of fifty cents and were allowed to take a seat anywhere we wanted around the cock pit.

Cock fighting is quite an institution in Mexico, and the breeding of the fighting kind an industry in itself.

The different breeds or strains are as well known in Mexico, as horses are known in the United States, and the breeding and training as carefully looked after.

The ring or pit is a circular affair much after the build of the bull ring, only on a much smaller scale. The pit itself was about twenty feet in diameter; a fence three feet high around it, and the seats rising in a circle above it.

The birds are on exhibition, one or two at a time being allowed in the ring with their owners. The birds are allowed to walk around and get a look at a possible opponent on the other side. The match is made; the birds are each put in a thin bag and weighed.

After the weighing has been accomplished, quite an exciting time is had making wagers on the outcome of the battle. Everything having been agreed to about rules, both birds are brought over to the judge, who sits in the ring close to the fence. He has some antiseptic with which he bathes the spurs and bills

of each cock, then the owner takes his bird and holds it down in front of the other till they are trying to break away and get at each other. They are then let go and either spar around for an opening or mix things. Very little fighting is done with the bill; the spur is what inflicts the punishment. With heads down and up and back and forth, each one looks for an opening and generally ends by both jumping up at the same time and using the spurs fastened on the legs to strike with. Sometimes one might get its quietus in the first round or heat, and sometimes the fight is long drawn out, where bills and spurs mix indiscriminately, and sometimes the fight may be decided without the death of either or by a draw. Some cocks will fight till they fall and others will quit when things don't go their way, and some have all the tricks of the ring and could give a few pointers to some of the human gladiators. One in particular, when it became winded let the other pick away at its comb all the way around the ring, taking all the punishment the other could inflict with its bill, and when it got rested up it turned around and faced the other, and after sparring a little both flew up and used their spurs, the loafer cutting the other in the neck. They sparred again and the next fly up was the end, for the one that did most of the fighting heretofore fell down a dead one. The loafing fellow cast a look of contempt at its fallen foe, gave its wings a flap and crowed as much as to say, "I told you so."

The above is a sample of what we saw. Quite a

number of fights took place but they were all about the same.

The owners of the birds, when the fight was on were about as much interested as were the birds themselves, and one old man, eighty years old, and who had a long flowing beard and looked more like an American missionary than anything else was grieved beyond measure because he had a bird under his arm and could not get a match.

We were told that this venerable looking old Don was a breeder and fighter of game cocks by profession. Alas for appearance.

Well the fight was over and we had witnessed another of the Mexican national sports, for next to a bull fight the native dearly loves a cock fight.

The difference between the two sports, if they can be so called, is that in the cock fight one or both usually leave the ring alive, but the bull never. The cock is fighting to show its superiority against another of its kind. The bull against fate, but there you are. You pay your money and you take your choice.

Cockfighting was not the only excitement that Sunday. It was the feast day of the Saint whose duty it was to look over the spiritual affairs of the town. The governor was in attendance, and all the other dignitaries of state, attending on the governor. Horse races and sports of all kinds beloved by the Mexican held sway. The Mexican dandy was in evidence with his sombrero so heavy with silver bullion that all his wealth might be said to be on his head instead of in his pocket. His trousers—but I think I

had better call them pants—were buttoned or laced on his legs and a small cannon stuck in his right hand hip pocket gave him the air of a bold, bad man reformed in spots.

The señoritas were out in numbers as the very presence of the above mentioned article of the opposite sex would warrant, but the hero in the eyes of all the ladies, young and old, seemed to be the dashing horseman, and especially the winner in the race. He was surrounded by them and they would have made him president on the spot if they could have voted before the next race came off.

Altogether it was a good-natured crowd that assembled there and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and if honoring a saint in Mexico is productive of so much good fellowship, then the catalogue of saints can be increased very largely, without injury to the material enjoyment of the population.

The evening was spent in the plaza, which was well lighted and crowded by the promenaders, who were entertained by the music of a first-class band. The governor was again present and seemed to be one of the people. He was evidently well known and popular, judging from the pleasant, informal way he greeted those who talked with him.

We could have been presented, but declined the honor in so public a place, especially as our Spanish might show that we were English and our English that we were Americans. At all events, the evening was a pleasant one, and the natives did not have all the enjoyment. We returned to our hotel reluctantly.

for while we were in the eye of the public, we tried to appear brave with the aid of a twig of a tree to brush the mosquitos off; but in your own room and face to face with them, then the coward in one's composition shows itself and you wish the night could be spent in dreams of the past events of the day.

Some one has written: "The sadness of the singer makes the music of the song." Whoever wrote that had never heard the mosquito sing. I tried to think that way, but I could not find anything that would indicate that a single mosquito in the whole chorus ever had a sorrow in all its biting experience.

I started out to make believe that we had a very nice visit and I am not going to spoil the impression by detailing the hours, minutes or seconds of the night and how they were spent, merely remarking that I looked as free from the scars of battle as any of the party when we assembled for breakfast the following morning.

The town presented quite a changed aspect from yesterday. The stores were open and the business life of the streets was in full blast. The donkey had its load on its back; the oxen were plodding along in the yoke; the vendor has his stand or his basket, and the men of affairs were passing to and fro, and even the barefooted youngster seemed on business bent.

We visited some of the stores making purchases of articles we wanted or that were peculiar to the place, notably some alligator skins. It seems that large numbers of these animals are killed in the sur-



*PALINQUE (pages 82-89)*





rounding swamps and rivers. We bought over a dozen skins, large and small.

The gum of the chicle tree is shipped from this place in large quantities. The store-keeper gave each of us a piece about as large as a base ball and assured us that one hundred pounds of chewing gum could be flavored with a piece of chicle of the same size.

Our hotel-keeper spoke English and acted as our guide around town, was a good fellow and did not try to get more than the traffic would bear; saw that our traps were taken on board the steamer, and came down and saw us off, when the steamer pulled out at 8 p. m. on the way back to Frontera.

The return trip was a repetition of the coming and we arrived at 5:30 the following morning.

No boat would arrive for three days, so we put in our time as best we could. We visited the American consul and found him well posted on the country and its products; looked over a little boat-building plant at the end of the town where Billie felt very much at home, and even commended the workmanship of the mechanics at work. Billie was suffering from a boil and hadn't energy enough to get into an argument and that accounted for the shipyard not being criticised, for he dearly loved an argument. George spent much of the time trying to find new beauty and meaning in an old font in the church across the plaza and Dick just swore. I helped each one out in his special line until we got aboard the tug at 6:45 a. m. Friday, glad to get away from Frontera, though we had been treated as well and as often as the place could afford.

We left the tug and boarded the steamer Tamaulipas at 8 o'clock.

### COATZACOALCOS.

This boat is a companion of the Tehautepec on which we came from Vera Cruz, so our accommodations were about the same. We spent all night on deck, sleeping when and where we could in preference to the cabin berths, and the following morning about 11 o'clock we arrived at Coatzacoalcas at which place we remained some five hours. It has a good harbor and is the terminal of the Tehuantepec Railway. It was selected by Cortez on account of its safe anchorage for shipping, and no doubt became quite a place in after years, but at present it shows but the remains of what it used to be.

The immediate neighborhood of the water-front and railway station is the only part of the town that shows life, but the advent of the railway and increased shipping gives promise of a future that is looked forward to by the population with pleasant anticipation. The hotel overlooking the river is everything that could be expected in such a place; in fact we were agreeably surprised when after some inquiry we found we could have chicken, steak, vegetables and ale for lunch. This was not the regular menu, of course, but we wanted something good and so ordered when we found it to be had. This meal was a great surprise to us and came in the right time, as it was about eating time on the boat when we arrived. We wandered along the street, looking into the quaint old

stores and noting the advance being made in the getting ready for the new order of things in great shipping and railway business that it promised. A new building of quite good size was in the course of construction, and two barbers are catering to the foreign trade and incidentally abusing each other. But this shows competition and they really were good barbers, for our party tried them both. One of them looked like a negro, and the other like an Indian, but neither of them like a Mexican.

The population, including the barbers, may approximate eight or nine hundred. The streets are miserable, and prosperity had better get a move on, or the population will have all its clothes worn out sitting around.

We sailed away from the waiting natives about four in the afternoon; had dinner on board; spent the night on deck, and the following day at whatever part of the boat that presented the most shade. A trip like the present offers opportunity for resolutions to lead a better life; at least, it ought to, if the individual is a staunch believer in the old-fashioned hereafter. We baked or stewed through the day and arrived at Vera Cruz at 6 p. m.

Two things had been determined on before arriving; one was to select a new hotel, and the next, not to get the same band of cargadores we encountered on our last visit.

We made our way to the hotel on the plaza and found it all we expected, and before landing made arrangements with a fellow passenger who lived in

Vera Cruz to see that our things were delivered at the hotel. We had been glad to get away from the city on our former visit, but we were glad to return to it again, even though we had been compelled to put up at the home of the retired pirate. After dinner we met our passenger friend who had so kindly helped us about our baggage, and through him some of the engineers of the Mexican navy. They were Scotchmen, and I was surprised to learn that a large percentage in this branch of the navy are of that nationality. They are not entitled to the protection of the mother country while in the Mexican government's service, but do not lose their citizenship, and on their return home, assume their standing as before. They all seemed to be good fellows and a very pleasant evening was spent in their company.

The following day saw us busy getting money drafts cashed, and replacing some of the articles we had either worn out or lost, and on Tuesday morning, at 6, we took our last look at the city of Vera Cruz and were on our way to Puebla.

Our thoughts were pleasant of the scenery ahead of us through the lower levels, the banana and coffee plantations, Cordoba and Orizaba, up the mountain's side, with a view of the Maltrata valley below, appearing and disappearing, as the train enters a tunnel, or winds around the mountain side.

### **THE RURALE.**

The effect is prettier, if possible, coming up than going down, as the trip takes so much longer time,

and more opportunity is presented to enjoy the change of scene. We arrived at Esperanza at 1 p. m. and had lunch. I was careful not to get left behind as I did on my former visit. A run of a little over two hours and we were at Apizaeo where we changed cars, and had half an hour to admire the rurales, the country soldiers or police. They are armed with rifle and bayonet, or sword and pistol, depending on whether they are mounted or foot soldiers. In some towns or stations they wear shoes, at other places, sandals, and frequently they go bare-footed. Usually a squad of five or six with guns line up on the platform and stand at attention till the train departs; but it often happens that where the train carries second and third-class passengers a rurale is stationed at the steps and none but first-class passengers are allowed to alight till they reach their destination.

The venders of fruit and drinks deliver their wares through the windows, and the litter in some of the cars after a meal, is just as well left to the imagination. The rurale while in many cases not a thing of beauty, is very useful. Formerly it was not the safest thing to travel by rail in Mexico: then the Government organized this branch of the army, and pity any outlaw who falls into the hands of these soldiers!

Some of the bravest and most daring of Mexico's citizens are officers in the rurales, and it is known that when trouble takes place, and they are sent to quell it, a crowd must disperse on their approach, for they shoot and shoot to kill, and so Mexico has become one of the safest places in the world to travel.

because of the distribution of these men in the most out-of-the-way places.

The train on the other side of the station house is getting ready to pull out for Puebla, so we must get aboard and leave the rurales and the fancy-carved walking sticks for which Apizaco is celebrated. A run of an hour and a half and we are pulling into the station of the "Village of the Angels."

### **PUEBLA.**

Again the cargadores, but in this instance it was not that we were charged too much, but that we had to use them at all. We had been directed by a friend where to put up and when we approached the carriage drivers and inquired for the hotel we had been advised to go to, they all shook their heads and mentioned another hotel. Well, we came to the conclusion that none of the carriages from our hotel were present and that those present belonged to a rival concern, and as they did not look at all inviting, we asked a cargador if he knew our hotel, and he did. This confirmed our opinion that we were very clever and had solved the whole problem. We employed this cargadore and empowered him to enlist a whole army of assistants, rather than go to a hotel not of our choice, but he only selected one, and after piling our things in two loads strapped them with long straps they keep for that purpose; then putting the strap around the top of the head, off they went and we following. They went at a half trot and it kept us busy keeping up with the procession. They trudged along block after

block till we began to think they were heading for another town, but, at last, they brought up at a hotel, and deposited the baggage on the office floor.

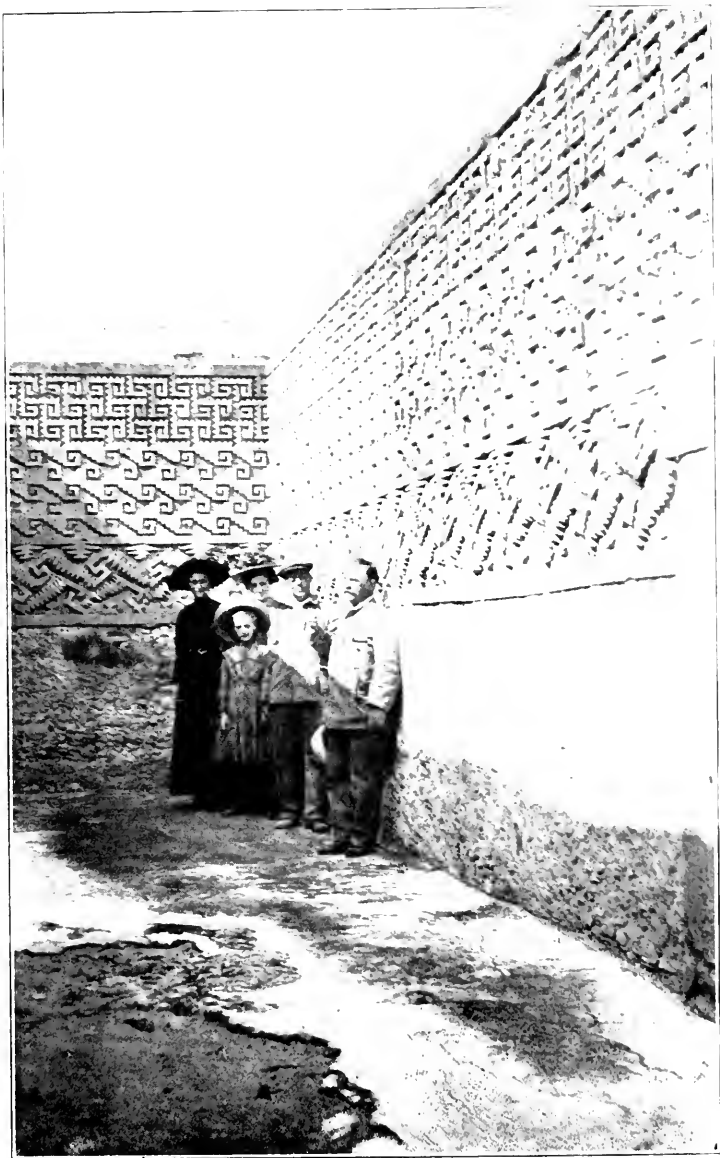
They were very reasonable in their demand, only charging one dollar Mexican for the whole outfit. A lady made her appearance; we registered and were assigned to rooms with two beds in a room. After taking in the general surroundings, we came to the conclusion that the hackmen were probably correct when they mentioned another hotel, and we soon discovered how it all happened. The good friend who had given us all the information about hotels and places had traveled through the country some ten or twelve years ago, and he had directed us to the places he had put up at in those days, forgetting that the world moves, even in Mexico. True, the hotel where we found ourselves, was comfortable, but it was away behind what we expected to find in a city with a population of 125,000 souls. We were located about a block and a half from the plaza but the street and buildings were about as good as any the same distance from the real business center, and the dinner that was served had a tendency to calm our ruffled feelings, and we concluded to say, "good enough." Cigars and a look around the plaza completely reconciled us to our present surroundings and conditions. George gazed longingly at the Cathedral on the south side of the Plaza Mayor, but the hour was late, so Dick said that prior to the band concert it would be just as well to know whether it was Orizaba or some other brew that we would have to ask for, and as he had already

selected his place, we all agreed to let him act as guide and provider.

Puebla, like all important cities in Mexico, has its legend miraculous, romantic or religious. One story of its founding is enough. It runs that the Fray Julian Garces desired to found a stopping place between the coast and the capital, and falling asleep, dreamed that he saw a beautiful plain on the slope of the great volcanoes with two little hills about a league between. There were springs in the plain and rivers with abundant water, with trees and flowers. In his dreams two angels appeared and measured the streets and squares. The Bishop awoke, and guided by the power that produced the dream, he soon came to the plain which he recognized, exclaiming, "Here hath the Lord, through his angels shown me the site of the city, and to his glory it shall be made." And so it was named Puebla de los Angeles. Another commonplace account tells of a number of Spanish families from Tlaxacala coming to the valley on the 16th of April, 1532, commencing the building of houses on this site; but the first account sounds better, so we will let it go at that.

Puebla is pleasantly situated at an altitude of 7091 feet above sea level and has a population of 125,000. It has seen many ups and downs since the time when it was only a dream of the good Bishop. It was captured by Iturbide August 2nd, 1821, was occupied by General Scott, May 25th, 1847, during the Mexican war with the United States, was the scene of the victory of General Zaragoza against the French on the





*MITLA (pages 127-134)*



5th of May, 1862; was captured by the French in 1863, and was finally taken from them by General Diaz. April 2nd, 1867. since which time it has behaved very nicely, devoting itself to the restoration of its 46 churches that had been battered about some by the carelessness of many invaders. The guide book tells the truth about the city itself, when it says: "The city is spread out on the plain in the foreground. To the West the great volcanoes of Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl; to the North is the mighty Malintzi and to the East old Orizaba."

A number of hills, large and small, are scattered around promiscuously, and on the left, in the distance, can be seen the Pyramid of Cholula. The streets are good enough and the buildings not bad: the business houses are principally on the plaza and are two and three stories high. The public buildings are fair, but the churches are grand. They are 46 in number and each one noted for its color effect, the church of one saint being red and that of another yellow, and so on through the list of saints, or until the colors are exhausted. The principal one, the Cathedral of Puebla, is said to rival that of the City of Mexico and except in size the finer of the two, but I have heard this said about three other churches in as many different towns. Anyhow, the one under consideration was begun in 1636 and consecrated on April 18th, 1649. It is 323 feet long and 101 feet wide and over 80 feet in the clear on the inside and surmounted by a dome. The old tower which cost \$100,000 contains eighteen bells, the largest of which weighs 20,000

pounds. The great choir is of stone and in the center of the nave; it is surrounded by wrought-iron gratings made in 1697. The carvings on the organ and woodwork are of native woods and supposed to be very fine. The pulpit is carved from Puebla onyx, and the marquetry work deemed a revelation. An inlaid picture of Saint Peter on the door leading to the Bishop's seat is considered a master-piece.

The high altar was commenced in 1789 and completed in 1819 at a cost of \$110,000. It is made of all the marbles in Mexico and the best samples of Puebla onyx. Beneath the altar is the tomb of the Bishop, made by slabs of onyx. An urn containing the ashes of San Sabastain de Aparicio and a thorn from the crown of Christ are the most revered possessions of the Cathedral. The other 45 churches we turned over to George and Billie, Dick and I devoting our time to more material affairs.

It was well that we delegated the remainder of the churches to George and Billie, for George reported having found out some important matters in the church history of Puebla, and Billie certified to their historical correctness.

It would seem that the architect of the church of San Francisco, having designed and built a flat arch roof in or on the edifice, was afraid to take out the forms on which it was built, and turned the job over to the priests, but their faith was not in roofs, and they refused to take a chance. Some laborers were called in, and they got cold feet. It was then decided to set fire to the supports and watch results.

which they did. The arch stood and is standing to this day, covering a period of over two hundred years.

The chapel of San Sebastain is also here and they discovered that it was he who first introduced wheeled carts and oxen into Mexico, and drove the first ox team between Puebla and Vera Cruz in 1542, and in the same year drove the team to Zacatecas. This is the gentleman whose bones the people of Puebla revere next to the thorn from the crown of Christ.

The town is tiles from roof to basement floor; that is, if they have basements. The towers are tile, the roofs tile, the floors tile, many of the walls inside are tile and some of the walls outside. They are as varied in color as are the churches, or the churches as varied in color as are the tiles; it is one and the same.

The onyx industry in Puebla must be large. We examined in it the rough and finish; it is of a good quality in both instances and must bring in quite a revenue, though not expensive except to visitors. It is worked up into all shapes and sizes, from the penholder, with which to make your will, to the slab to cover your vault when you are laid away. It is sculptured into statues of saints and sinners, in goblets for wine and fonts for holy water, and in all its varied forms, is beautiful.

The plaza is surrounded on three sides by stores, restaurants and cantinas. The stores close about 11 in the forenoon and open again at 2 in the afternoon. This custom prevails in all Mexican cities of any importance, including the City of Mexico, and in that

country is a good rule as everybody gets a rest in the heat of the day and no one loses any business since all stores are closed. Oh! there is one exception and that is the cantinas.

### **PYRAMID OF CHOLULO.**

Our second day was devoted to a visit to Cholulo, the onetime Mecca of ancient Mexico.

This was one of our cherished pilgrimages. We walked a number of blocks to the starting place of the street car, as it was advisable to get seats at the beginning of the trip rather than take chances of getting accommodations along the streets. An outside car is run for the natives and a covered one for visitors or rather for first and second-class passengers. The crew consists of a conductor, a driver and two mules. We took the outside car and had quite a time convincing the conductor that we preferred it, and only satisfied him when we gave him a little more than first-class fare.

The distance between Puebla and Cholulo is eight miles and the ride not unpleasant across the Atoyas valley.

An arched aqueduct about a quarter of a mile on the right adds to the interest of the trip.

The hacienda of San Juan, a stone building, on the hill to the left, is noted for its having been stormed and carried by assault in one of the many battles of the neighborhood.

Across a bridge, over the Atoyac river, past churches and haciendas, large and small, with the

sound of the bells on the mules and the polite words of encouragement of "mula, mula" to them by the driver, or the application of the whip when they fail to respond to the coaxing, and instead of "mula, mula," "burro, burro," and the whip again, but the mules, from what I saw of them, were perfectly indifferent as to whether they were flattered or abused, the driver doing all the worrying. We made the trip in the schedule time, but found quite a change in the place since Cortez first stood in the plaza and was welcomed by the high priests of Cholulo.

The founding of the city and the building of the pyramid, like most of Mexico's ancient history is lost, if ever it was written, but tradition says that Cholulo was a city and the pyramid there long before the advent of the Aztecs into the plateau.

One of the legends is that it was built by a race of giants descending from two survivors of a great deluge that overspread the land, and that it was their intention to raise its heights to heaven, but they incurred the displeasure of the gods, who sent forth fire to destroy them. This is taken to correspond with the Chaldean and Hebrew accounts of the deluge and the Tower of Babel.

Prescott tells us something about it but leaves it about as we found it so far as anything authentic is concerned.

In early days Cholulo was the capital of an independent state, long before the Aztecs time, and though no one knows how it happened, the city became celebrated for its very antiquity and religious traditions,

for here it was that the great fair God paused on his way to the ocean, passing twenty years teaching the Toltecs the arts of civilization, after which he passed on assuring them of his return in the course of time. After his departure the great pyramid was built to do him honor. On top of this pyramid was erected a temple in which was placed the image of the deity "God of the air," as he was known. The face of the image was black, though the original was white. He was represented as wearing a mitre on his head, waving with flames of fire, a collar of gold around his neck, pendants of turquoise in his ears, a jewelled sceptre in one hand and a painted shield, the emblem of his rule over the winds, in the other.

The magnificence of the temple and the sanctity of the place brought thousands from the farthest corners of Anahuac to worship.

The worship became debased and instead of offering up flowers and fruit, human beings became the offerings, and it is said that 6,000 victims were offered up annually on the altars of Cholulo and its never-dying fire.

The great pyramid was 177 feet high, 1,423 feet on each of the four sides which were facing the cardinal points. It was truncated in form, had four terraces and the platform on the top covered more than an acre. It was reached by 120 steps and also by a paved roadway up the west side.

At the time that Cortez first entered Cholulo it was said to contain 20,000 houses within the wall and as many more outside in the immediate surroundings.



Cortez himself stated that from the top of the pyramids he counted four hundred towers and that no temple had more than two towers and many of them only one.

The city that once was the capital of a great people is now a straggling town or village of less than 5,000 people. The market place retains its ancient name of "Tianquiz;" the plaza is old enough looking to have been laid out when the pyramid was built. A church on one side, a military place, back of which is the market on another, and the main street running past the third; a large fountain of stone and metal from which the people get water is in the plaza, and a statue of Juarez further on and nearly opposite the church.

The houses on the main street are one-story and only a few on the right near the plaza amount to anything.

We climbed the pyramid and found a Christian church occupying the site of the former temple. The view of the surrounding valley from this point is worth the climb and while the present town of Cholulo has some twenty odd churches, I counted a greater number than that in the open country from the top of the mysterious and wonderful pyramid of Cholulo.

We descended slowly and took one of the mule cars for Puebla, reflecting on the fleeting grandeur of all things human.

The evening was devoted to getting ready for an

early start the following morning to Oaxaca and the ruins of Mitla.

We had become so far at peace with the carriages that we engaged two of them to call at the hotel in the morning and take us to the station. The cargadores were disappointed I suppose when they found that we had gone without their assistance, but the carriages filled the bill and at 6:15 we were on our way.

From Puebla the railway descends through a fairly good valley and some small towns but the first place of any importance is Tehuacan, 79 miles out of Puebla, and 5,408 feet above sea level, famous for its pomegranates and quinces, great quantities of which they ship annually, but its chief attraction at present is the El Riego springs, about two miles from the town and which is reached by street cars. These springs have the reputation of curing all sorts of stomach, liver and kidney troubles, and are a guaranteed remedy for gall stones.

We had only ten minutes' stop, and the time was hardly long enough to prove the efficacy of the waters, had we any of the troubles they guaranteed to cure. Indeed, I was more interested in trying to get a snapshot of a rurale, who was barefooted and had a patch on his panties for every state of the union. I followed him up and down the platform, but the place was crowded and just as I pressed the bulb of the camera, fate, in the shape of a small boy, butted in between us and I caught more boy than rurale in the picture.

From Tehuacan the descent is more steep and the

heat rises as the elevation lessens. Palm trees appear and later on immense fields of sugar cane are passed through. We reach our lowest point at Quiotepec, 146 miles from Puebla and a drop from there of 5,324 feet and 1,767 feet above sea level.

From this point we begin to climb, passing little plantations that look like oases in the breaks between the mountains, until we reach the summit at Las Sedas and an elevation of 6,304 feet. The scenery for the last 40 miles or from Tomellin to Las Sedas is grand, the train winding around curve after curve, following a little river between mountains of immense height on either side, huge cliffs overhang the cars and one wonders where an opening can be found to get out, for ahead the mountains seem to meet, and a hundred yards behind looks as if it were the starting point, so quickly are the curves and so abrupt the change. The steep mountain sides are bare and look as if some giant had blasted his way between them, so jagged and precipitous are the walls, and one imagines the giant gets stuck once in a while and the result is tunnel.

This ride, outside of the beautiful view of the valley below, beats the Maltrata, but I must not praise this piece of mountain grandeur too much, or I will have nothing left to say, should nature have something more startling to present.

From Las Sedas we again go down hill and are soon passing through a country of flowers and farms that is pleasant to look upon. A beautiful flower grows here in great profusion. It is on a tree. Billie

told us all about it for I forgot to say that Billie is a botanist also. but he claimed this flower had no right to grow on a tree at all, but should confine itself to a bush. I hunted the name up and it is spelled bougainvillias. I think Billie would have it a longer name, but no matter what it is called, its colors of crimson and pink in such profusion made the front gardens and other places where it grew a very pleasant contrast to the forbidding though grand cliffs of the Tomellin canyon.

The clouds began to gather as we approached Oaxaca and when we arrived at 6:30 there was a thunder storm.

A hotel runner had boarded the train up the road and we selected his hotel, because it was marked down for us to take and most of the other tourists did likewise, as they thought we knew. Among them a noble lord and his lady, and a gentleman of the life guards and wife (who, by the way, acted and talked like ordinary mortals).

Our hotel runner spoke English, but put us in a carriage in the Mexican language, and whatever he said to the young man who drove must have impressed him with the idea that we were to be the first at the hotel, for he drove us through that thunder storm for a distance of half a mile at a most reckless speed.

The driver of the noble lord must have had the same tip for at the distance of half a block from the hotel, we collided with them and came pretty near upsetting their apple cart. We arrived at the hotel at the same time; went to their carriage to see

if the ladies were hurt, but they were right side up though somewhat shaken. We found that rooms were scarce, hence the race for first place. When we found out the condition of affairs, we insisted on rooms being assigned to the ladies first, a courtesy they about as firmly refused, but it so developed that the choice was "Hobson's," and everybody took what was given them.

We were conducted through some halls and into a court or patio; rooms were on all sides of this court, which was one-story high. The floors were stone or tile and the light either a candle or lamp. My room was large enough but the ventilation did not come up to the most modern ideas. There was a lack of windows, but the door was equipped with a wire netting, and so we made believe we were satisfied, as we were to start for the ruins of Mitla on the following morning.

After dinner we made arrangements for a carriage for the trip and then looked over the town, which impressed us favorably, and we felt sure that on closer acquaintance we would like it. Our thoughts and preparations, however, for the present were centered in Mitla.

The following morning found us on time at the little station on the outskirts of the city where the mule cars start for Tule; as at Puebla, there was an open car and a closed one and again surprise was shown when we took the open one in preference to the other. Fortunately the man who had hired the team to us was along, and by paying the fare of the

closed car and a little more we arranged to have our own way and rode as we preferred. This car ride was taken on advice of the gentleman referred to, as we saved time and avoided a very rocky road and uninteresting stretch of country; our carriage having been dispatched earlier was to meet us at the village of Tule at which place we arrived after the mules had been praised and coaxed, abused and whipped.

### **TULE TREE.**

Before proceeding on the trip proper, we were driven to the old church yard in which the famous Tule tree stands. To pass through the village and not see the tree, would be as bad as going to Mitla and not seeing the ruins. This tree stands in the church yard of Santa Maria del Tule, and from what is said of it, was full grown at the time of the conquest, and is even suggested that the builders of Mitla rested under its shade on their pilgrimage to that other buried city of Monte Alban, on the hill top about four miles from Oaxaca. Be this as it may, the tree itself is a whopper. It is 154 feet around the trunk, six feet above the ground, and to illustrate its immense size the guide book assures you that if twenty-eight people stood in a circle and touched each other's finger tips they could barely meet around the tree. It looks more like an aggregation of trees growing together, though I suppose it is all one. It is not tall in proportion to its thickness; it separates into many trees or branches about eight feet above the ground. It is

evergreen and the leaves hang down something like the weeping willow.

That this tree has been celebrated for some time is evidenced by a wooden tablet on which is an inscription, signed by Humboldt, the German traveller, and so long has this tablet been fastened on the tree that the bark has grown around it and covered from sight part of the inscription.

Our carriage and four mules are at the gate; the mules are dozing with one eye open. The driver has gone them one better and closed both, but the whole outfit wakes up on our approach. Dick, Billie and George get into the body of the carriage, which is one of those double-seated cloth covered arrangements with side flaps that can be rolled up or buttoned down as the weather or inclination demands.

I climbed in front with the driver as it left more room inside and gave me an opportunity of showing him how little I knew about his native tongue.

A run of a few hundred yards, a turn to the left, and we are on the main road to Mitla.

There is no scenery to speak of, a level valley for some miles and then the foot-hills, and soon we reach the top with another valley ahead. The road, so far, is fairly good, but we would have not taken much notice of it one way or the other—we were too much interested in what we saw on it. This was nomination day in Mexico, the day when the candidates for president and vice-president were to be named and to be named meant elected, and then there could be only one man named and that was Diaz, the greatest of Mexi-

cans, and whatever else may be said, the one man who has made Mexico what it is today. Well, everyone we met on the road felt the same about it as we did, and they were all on their way to Oaxaca to give vent to their feelings.

Between Tule and Tlacolula we met over one hundred caravans of pack mules, donkeys, ox teams and charcoal laden burros, men with loads, women with bundles, all headed for market, some to get rid of their load and others to accumulate one; here a man mounted and the family walking; there a colony of charcoal burners and twenty or thirty burros carrying two or four sacks each, trudging along—man and beast equally satisfied, or indifferent. A drove of pigs seemed to call for more energy than anything else we met on the whole journey. At one place we passed a wagon that had broken down; the wooden axle caused the trouble. It had been laden with sacks of corn and the driver had taken off the load, packed it on the roadside, tied his team to the fence and crawled into the wagon and was sound asleep. We passed through a drowsy village with a sleepy name, threw centavos to the little ones, as a reward for keeping awake, and on through the cactus-fenced lanes of the farmer to the more pretentious village or town of Tlacolula, where we rested our horses and regaled ourselves on whatever was obtainable.

Though we were anxious to get to Mitla we could not leave without a visit to the market and a look through the old church and school house, where a company of young men are being educated. I think,



for the priesthood. It is a college of some kind and the youths are bright and clean-cut. Our driver was waiting and ready when we returned and off we went on a gentle down hill grade, the scenery improving as we got closer to the mountain, passing boulders on the left, as if they had been dropped from the clouds. Still further on we passed a formation of absinain rock that seemed to be there without excuse. Then down a pretty steep grade and through a stream. A run of a few hundred yards more and we pull up in front of the only hotel in the village of Mitla and conducted by one Don Felix Quero. We washed down the dust of the road; saw that we were assigned rooms: and were off to the ruins.

### **RUINS OF MITLA.**

The distance from the village is not great. Leaving the hotel we went around the corner to the left, as we were directed, through the narrow lanes past huts and a kind of a little make-believe store, again to the left, through another lane and the bed of a creek, a little ahead and on the right, we got the first sight of the buildings and care-taker and by the time we reached the spot where he was standing, we were in the ruins.

We tried him in English but he did not enthuse over it. We tried him in Spanish and he enthused too much, at least, for us, but we got him to understand that we wanted to see as much as possible in English. The procession was formed and he led us from wonder to wonder in that wonderful place of

desolate grandeur, through underground passages and courts, up massive stone steps to corridors of mosaics of Egyptian pattern, through openings over which lintels of great mass were in position, and as he led us from one to the other, his only utterance, when he stopped was, "see here." If it were underground and he used candles, he would point to some particularly fine mosaic with the candle and "see here." We followed him without tiring though the Christian church on the hill, built on the foundation of a part of the ruins; the church itself looking old enough to be included, to the place now believed to be the "sepulcher" of the kings, to the opening in a hill to what may have been the catacombs. We did not enter but satisfied ourselves that passages ran clear through it. The guide was painstaking and conscientious and though our Spanish was limited, we thoroughly enjoyed the visit, and conveyed to him our approval of his efforts in that universally understood language, the silver token of appreciation.

The time we spent was too brief to write a full detailed account of all we saw to make it intelligible, and as the ruins have been described and written about so much, I will take one of the many accounts and set it down here in a condensed form.

The chronicler takes you as if he were the guide and says: "You now stand within the graven walls of a temple that may be older than Solomon's."

I have called them temples, and temples they may have been, raised to the honor of the gods their builders worshiped, though there is little similarity



*HALL OF MONOLITHS, MITLA (pages 127-134)*



to the teocalis found in the city of Tenochtitlan and the other cities of Anahuac on the plains of the North. These low walls differ radically in their construction and decoration from the high pyramidal temples of the Toltecs, though the absence of arches in the temples of Mitla would indicate that the builders were of the same school, as the Toltecs had no arches in their architecture and for the most part avoided curves and circular decoration.

If not a temple, then it may have been a fortress, a most impregnable one, and unless the instruments of war were more formidable than those of later generations, or even those of the present day, the thick walls would have resisted the most persistent assault. The fortress idea further obtains from the fact that there are no windows or other openings in the walls, and the only entrances open into the inner square or plaza. For these reasons the fortress idea is in favor. But the people of the earlier ages did not need such formidable works of defense. The palace of a king or a mighty chieftain may have been within these walls. The Hall of the Monoliths, a banquet hall, the corridor of mosaics, a royal bed chamber, the central court might have been the throne room and audience hall, but I adhere to the first impressions and say, here was a great temple. This may have been one temple of two or four courts each. There are in each of the north and south groups four-walled courts facing about an open patio lying exactly at the four points of the compass, with their walls on lines true to the needle. Of the southern group only three of

the courts have the walls standing. The east wall is in the best condition; next the north, while the south is almost crumbled away, and the west is but a heap of stones.

The heavy cap pieces of the entrance to the north court are supported in the center by a huge column of hewn stone. Under it leads a passage underground that may have extended to the other courts, as there is a subterranean gallery running the entire length of the court, east and west, with a short extension due north, under the east court of this group in another cruciform chamber. In the north group, the north court is in the finest state of preservation, and gives ample evidence of the magnificent handiwork of the men of a buried and forgotten race, whose civilization is attested by the intricate carvings here; in the shaping of these stones, in the lifting of them from their quarries and setting them in their places, as with a mason's tact that all the earth's trembling have not shaken, nor the warring elements effaced their gravings.

The north court is built on the same plan with the others; its walls are in a most complete state.

The entrance of all the courts open into the open patio in the center, with no openings at all in the outer walls. There are no windows anywhere.

In the north court and extending its entire length is a grand corridor, called the Hall of the Monoliths. Here are six massive columns, nearly seven feet in circumference and twelve feet high, ranging down the center of the hall. And under the wall a passage

leads to a second larger room whose walls also face the compass points. This room is surrounded by four smaller ones; the one on the west side being in an almost complete state. The walls are laid in the most intricate mosaics of small pieces and the most beautiful and unique designs, fitted and put together without mortar or cement. In each one of the courts of all the groups are niches, square faced with heavy stones set in the wall as if intended for the shrine of household gods.

The ancient races of this land had no arches in their architecture, as is evidenced by everything that is left of their meagre history, and here, over their square-cut doorways, are magnificent monoliths, twelve to eighteen feet long, four to six feet in width, and three to five feet in thickness. The East court of the North group has only part of the front wall standing, and two columns which show that there were here also a hall with monolith columns; the massive lintel that was over the door has been thrown down.

Down the hill towards the village, in the midst of some huts of cane, is a modern discovery, which the Indians call the "sepulcher," long used as a corn bin. It is about eight feet long and six feet wide and below the level of the ground. The architecture and cutting of the stone is exactly the same as in the larger ruins on the hill.

Looking to the south are the walls that extend to the banks of the Rio, to the westward is a pyramid of earth and stones crowned by an ancient but yet a more modern shrine; and across the Rio in the midst

of the village some other pyramids of earth and stone and loosely put together, yet withstanding the ravages of the elements. Leaving the church, walk down the hill temples on the right, and after crossing the Rio come to the sepulcher and pyramids, passing through the village to the main road and turning to the right, you are again at the hacienda or hotel.

It is now after dinner at the hospitable hacienda of Don Felix Quero Village of Mitla. The meal was a good one, I suppose, but the dishes were passed in a mechanical sort of a way, and it might be called a meal of ruins—ruin soup and ruin dessert, and antiquary entrees between. The mosaics could be almost be felt between the teeth when the frijoles were served, and over the coffee Billie and George got into a wrangling over the question of whether the ruins had been temple, fortress or palaces. The English in Billie wanting it to stand for palace and George's early education making him contend for the church. We finally got them to leave the question in abeyance and let them be known as they are today—the ruins of Mitla.

This was only agreed to when the irreverent Dick threatened to prove that what he had come so far to see was but the remains of an ancient distillery. I had done some heavy thinking on the subject but could arrive at no definite conclusion as to the use of which the buildings had been put when they were first erected. They are certainly wonderful in a way, as they lie today in view of their supposed antiquity, but the queries of some writers about



how it was possible for the builders to perform such tasks without the aid of modern machinery is not giving the builders much credit on that score. The mere handling of the material, such as placing the lintels and the monoliths, is as nothing compared to the task of assembling the material, and the artistic ability displayed in executing the design. The quarrying, transporting and fixing in place of either the Aztec calendar stone or the sacrificial stone presents something of a difficulty, but the raising of the monoliths and the lintels at Mitla are tasks that could be accomplished at the present day without the aid of machinery, so-called.

Mitla ruins are wonderful, as all ruins of the ancients are, for the reason that we cannot bring ourselves to credit the people who have lived in the remote past, with being anything but savages, but the mechanic of the past, I take it, was a great deal like the mechanic of the present, good, bad and indifferent.

The hand then, as now, learned the cunning of the craft in a few years and as the history of the human family, so far as we know has run in eras, so certain races or tribes have left their mark on the world's intellectual and physical progress, and it is reasonable to assume that the ruins we have discovered and are discovering today are the results of a building age, the necessity or conditional warrant for which has ceased to exist.

In our present day how many know the arts of a few years ago, and how many in the near future will be able to perform any of the many things which to-

day are looked upon as commonplace, simply because of the change in conditions, for instance, writing as it is practiced at the present time will soon become a thing of the past, through the typewriting machine and voice recording devices, and thousands of years from now the world will be pondering over the mysteries of our strange hieroglyphics, or mechanical accomplishments, and marveling at the strange civilization that could produce such an undesirable condition of affairs in habitation, occupation and government.

After visiting Mitla and Palenque and wondering at what must have been the conditions of the country and who its people when the ruins were first erected, I will pass the solution of the question to those who may come after us, for those who have preceded have not given the answer.

That the ruins are different in character if not in age, I am satisfied. Those of Palenque would appeal to me as the effort of a hardy warlike people, and Mitla the product of a more refined and artistic race.

Mexico has a long story to tell some day in its ruins, and it is strange that the day should have been put off even so far as this.

The village of Mitla is not much in itself. The best thing about it is old Felix and his hotel. The inner court is pretty with flowers and birds, and the covered porch or corridor surrounding it gives one an opportunity of keeping in the shade, which is something to be grateful for. The bedrooms are fronting on one side of this patio and are comfortable. The meals are passing good and the desire to please un-

bounding, so it was with kindly feelings we took our leave of the cactus fenced village, and Don Felix, who in a few short years will become a pleasant memory in the story of Mitla.

### OAXACA.

We retraced our way to Oaxaca with pleasant anticipation, as the city had a very inviting appearance.

The hotel at which we put up had received additional guests since we left and was full, but it turned out a blessing as we were directed by the carriage owner to another, which proved in every way superior and was conducted by an old resident of San Francisco. We were made very comfortable and through his kindness were placed in the way of many pleasures and privileges that otherwise we would not have enjoyed.

Oaxaca is a city that is enjoyable from almost any point of view. Its people are pleasant, and its buildings attractive. Its history stirring and romantic. It had been heard of before the conquest, but it was when Cortez had selected Coatzacoalcas as a safe place for shipping, and dispatched Valasquez de Leon and a hundred and fifty men to form a colony at that place, that Oaxaca first got on the map.

Their route overland led them southwest through the canyons and the valley of Oaxaca and the land being reported good, Cortez obtained a large tract and laid out plantations for the crown.

The estate prospered and many small towns and

villages soon dotted the valley. Mitla became a prosperous town and Oaxaca its rival.

After a visit to Spain Cortez returned with the title of Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca and both marquis and town assumed greater importance henceforward.

The marquis brought back some nice new clothes from Spain and Oaxaca proceeded to build a cathedral.

Originally the name of Oaxaca was Huaxyacac and in the native language meant "in the nose of the guajes"—the guajes is a fruit tree in the valley valuable both for its fruit and its wood. This was way back in 1486, but when the Spaniard came he couldn't get his tongue around the pronunciation and for a time named it Antequera, because it reminded some one of his native towns in Spain, but on the 25th day of April, 1532, Charles the V. by decree created it a city and Pope Paul III, established the Bishopric of Oaxaca June 21st, 1535.

During the next two hundred years it didn't bother much about outside affairs, contenting itself with selling cochineal and building churches.

The Cathedral was founded in 1553, though active work was not begun on the building until 1610 and when completed cost \$2,000,000.

The church of Santo Domingo is considered the best in the city and has the proud distinction of having cost more money than any other church on the continent.

The life-size figures of the saints are in relief

and covered with gold and the gold on the walls was so plentiful that the soldiers quartered in an old convent close by, helped themselves so freely that they didn't seem to care when pay day came around, but when the church was remodeled by Bishop Gillow, it stopped paying the soldiers involuntary dividends, and they had to fight for a living.

The church as it now stands cost \$13,000,000.

There are other churches in the city, it is needless to add, but the government and other buildings are waiting for a chance, so we will let the churches attend to their own affairs for the time being.

The state palace fronting on the main plaza is about the best building in Oaxaca. It runs the full length of the square, has a large court inside with offices and quarters for the military. It was built in 1883-5.

Among other public buildings are the municipal palace, built in 1873; palace of justice, 1872; scientific institute, 1830; hospital general, 1865, and state library, 1880.

Then comes the market, a block from the plaza and containing all the varied products of the tropics. In the midst of this market is a large ornamental fountain of cast iron and stone. It is a circular affair about thirty feet in circumference; the outer casting about one inch thick and three feet high, in the center is a fountain and between that and the outer casting, a stone floor on the ground level. The water flows rather slowly and does not overflow until it rises about two feet. The people generally get their water from

this or similar fountains at different parts of the city, and it is amusing to see ten or twenty persons of all ages, with a square tin can and a string fastened to one side of it, stand around the outside and throw them down on the stone floor inside, and as the water rises drag the can along the bottom and whatever water they collect, pour into an earthen jar. It takes a long time to fill their water bottle, and there they sit discussing the latest fashions in sandals and other tropical adornment. This is what I called fishing for water and it comes as near it as anything I ever saw.

In this market in addition to fruit and flowers, vegetables and meat, you can buy clothing and finery of all kinds, and for one dollar Mexican you can become the possessor of a pair of sandals made while you wait, or you can buy a new sombrero for thirty dollars and instead of having it sent home, place it on top of your old one so that everybody may know you have money.

Oaxaca unlike most of the Mexican towns has some business streets other than those bounding the main plaza, or plazas, for there are two in the center of the town. The larger of the two, is called the Plaza de Armas, having immense shade trees, a profusion of flowers and fruit trees on which were growing something like grape fruit. In the center is a monument to Juarez, who was a native of Oaxaca.

The smaller square is called the Plaza de Leon. The two join at the northeast corner on which is located the Cathedral.

The streets are not all that could be desired, and

the sanitary conditions have not reached that state of perfection, that could be hoped for, but they are busy and in the course of a few years the open gutter in the center of the street will be a thing of the past.

The buildings both public and private are commendable, and the population in the main prosperous looking and happy. I mean the last remark to apply to the business people. The others look satisfied in a barefooted sort of a way.

The city did not always have a population of forty thousand souls, and this has no reference to the bare feet either, but the number of actual individual residents.

We learn that in 1560 it could only boast of five hundred all told, in 1790 it had multiplied to fourteen thousand. Sixteen years later an illustrious son of Mexico, Benito Juarez was born in one of its small streets, and when he was but six years old, the town was called upon to defend itself against an invading army in the war of independence.

On the 24th of November, 1812 Moreles arrived in front of the city and demanded its surrender in three hours.

The people had remained loyal to the Spanish, but put up a weak defense.

Moreles captured the city inside of two hours after the fighting began. It was retaken by the Royalists two years later, and back and forth a number of times, when the warring factions were not busy elsewhere, until the war was over.

The greatest event in the history of the city of

Oaxaca, however, occurred on the 15th of September, 1830, when "the man of Mexico" Porfirio Diaz, her most illustrious son was born in La Calle de Soledad number ten.

Diaz studied law under Juarez but their battles for the most part, though perhaps legal were in the field. They fought together for a common cause, and it is hard to say which of the two names is most dear to the hearts of the people today.

The house where Diaz was born had been torn down and a school erected on the site, but the room in which that important event took place is still preserved in the building.

Another house with a history is pointed out in which Juarez wrote the Mexican constitution, and the city, in 1872, changed its official name to that of Oaxaca de Juarez in his honor.

Our two days' visit was all too short but we were anxious to be on the way, and after an all day ride found ourselves again in Puebla, remaining over night and at six the following morning started on our return to the City of Mexico.

We arrived on time at seven p. m. and at our hotel received mail and papers from San Francisco; devoted the following day to assembling our traps and getting ready to visit the show city of Mexico, Guadalajara.

George found that he was needed in San Francisco on business so he devoted the last day to visiting as many of the churches as possible, and Billie accompanied him to one or two on account of some dispute



concerning the height of an altar or the number of shrines, I don't remember which, but whatever it was Billie promised George that he would demonstrate the error of his contention when we again met in our home city.

### GUADALAJARA.

At seven p. m. we took train for Guadalajara, arriving at Irapuato about three p. m., changed cars and at nine in the morning were in the station of Mexico's show town.

We engaged a cargador and told him to get more help and bring our traps to the hotel. We waited around to see that he was attending to our wants and what was our surprise, when he passed out of the station with every piece of baggage belonging to us strapped together and all on his back. We followed but he was at the hotel before us.

I asked the proprietor how much we ought to pay and after looking at the number of pieces told us we ought to give him fifty cents, and when we gave him a dollar the cargador was the most thankful fellow in seventeen counties. What a change from Vera Cruz. There it was ten, and here was one doing practically the same amount of work.

The first impression of the town received through the caragador, was good and I am pleased to say that on no occasion did we have to change it after. The hotel was good and the proprietor knew his business and soon put us in the way of seeing things, and in the course of a couple of hours we had taken in the

principal places of attraction and were on our way to San Pedro, one of the suburbs.

We had two objects in this side trip, one was to see the pottery works, the other to visit the Indian sculptor, Juan Panduro, of whose work we had heard.

The village is reached by electric street cars and the run over what is known as the Calzada de San Pedro is interesting. The road is shaded by trees, and the end is reached before one has really settled down to enjoy it.

The wealthier class, it seems, make their summer residence there and that accounts for the good houses we had noticed.

We took a general look over the place, which takes but a short time, a hurried look over some of the products of the pottery, and then had about half a dozen children show us the place of the sculptor. He was home and after a few, a very few words of conversation of a general character, I arranged for him to make me in clay. He seated me in a chair and walked around once or twice and looked at me very closely, meanwhile making half audible remarks, and I took it that he was informing himself of the hard job ahead of him. He retired to another room and returned with a lump of black clay, and standing before me made some further remarks, gave the clay a few turns, pulled out a piece of it that was to represent my nose, jammed the sides in where my cheeks were to be, pulled down a chunk that was to be my chin, took a little wooden paddle and swatted the clay on top where my hair would soon be, then he gouged

out a couple of pieces where my eyes were to be, scraped a little from the back of the neck and stuck it on either side for ears, grabbed another piece and stuck it on below the head, and gave a grunt of satisfaction. The actual work then began. He now put on his spectacles and gave me a couple of looks, fixed my mouth on straight and proceeded with his little wooden instrument to pick and scrape, pat and rub here and there, moving around from one side to the other, and changing my position once in a while. This continued for about two hours and a half, and I inquired if I was finished. He informed me that I was not half made, and hardly knew how to take his meaning, but when he showed me the clay I could see he did not intend to be insulting. I was tired sitting, however, and we agreed that he should come to the hotel in Guadalajara and finish me, which he did. Dick and Billie looked on quite a portion of the time and when it was completed pronounced it a splendid work considering the subject. It really was perfect, so far as the modeler's work was concerned, and for all his effort he only charged fifteen dollars Mexican.

Juan Panduro is a wonder in that he is the only Indian who has gained a reputation as a modeler. He is now over sixty and has a large family. One of his sons followed in his profession, but has never made a name for himself. The old artist will soon be gone, and I am pleased to be in possession of a sample of his handiwork.

The home of Panduro is much like that of his

neighbors. It is of adobe, his studio in the front. In the rear is a patio and his family rooms. He is apparently a lover of flowers, for he has many growing, and the little ones, possibly his grandchildren, like to pluck them and present them to visitors. San Pedro outside of the clay industry is not much, but with the pottery modelling cups and saucers and old man Panduro modelling "mugs," the place has quite a reputation.

Guadalajara has a population of 150,000 and is said to be the cleanest, brightest and most delightful city in the country. It was founded in 1541 after two former sites had been abandoned. It is located in the midst of a plain that rises on three sides in terraces toward the mountains. The west leads to the Tierra Caliente, where, as the guide book informs you, the mountains seem to cease and the plain and sky come together. It is famous for its clean streets, its beautiful parks and plazas, churches old and rich in architecture and decoration, and boasts of the finest theatre, the Degollado, and claims for it the distinction of being the largest on the continent, excepting the Metropolitan in New York or the Auditorium in Chicago. It was opened in 1866, and has five tiers of seats, stalls and boxes, and the decorations are certainly good.

The streets run at right angles, intersecting the parks and plazas, some twenty in number. There are fourteen portales that cover the sidewalks for blocks. There are bridges without number and churches galore. The public buildings, outside the theatre and Cathedral, are the governor's palace, the mint, the



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state capitol of Jalisco, the hospicio and the penitentiary. The paso is a boulevard on both sides of the Rio San Juan de Dios.

The business streets resemble those of the United States more than any other Mexican town, and the stores are good. The general characteristic of the architecture is Mexican. That the inhabitants may not go unwashed, it has twenty-five bath places, and for dining and sleeping purposes it has twenty-eight hotels.

It would take as long a time to describe the city properly as we remained in it, and so I will just mention a few of the institutions or buildings in which they take most pride.

The Cathedral comes first. The original one was built in 1548 and was a thatched hut. The present one was commenced in 1561 and completed in 1618. The towers were thrown down by an earthquake in 1818 and the clock towers were badly injured at the same time, but are all right again. The towers, as they now stand, are not Mexican, but spires or steeples. In one of these is a little bell that was rung only on important occasions. Another which in former times was rung in thunder storms to ward the lightning off.

The interior is rich in decorations and has many valuable paintings, one especially noteworthy.

The Assumption by Murillo, for which the church was offered \$75,000 gold.

One of the institutions that Guadalajara is justly proud of is the hospicio. It is of light colored stone and one story high, but covers a whole block. It con-

tains twenty-three courts with fountains and flowers. It is managed under state authority and admits children and old people of both sexes, the sick from the penitentiary and the sick of the city. The children as they grow up are taught trades or some way of making a living. The girls do lace work and embroidery, which is sold to help run the institution. It has 800 beds and was built in 1791.

We visited one of the bathing establishments in the same building as our hotel. Whether it was a part of it or not, I don't know but the manager showed us through, and I must say anything more complete for the purpose could hardly be imagined. There were baths of all kinds from the Turkish to the plunge and everything in perfect order.

The street car service was good with overhead trolley, and good sized American built cars, and taking it all in all, after seeing the other Mexican cities, we were delighted with Guadalajara and its attractions.

### **AGUAS CALIENTES.**

Started next morning at 8:55 on our way for home, changed cars at Irapuato at 4:10 p. m. and arrived at the hot water town at 10:30 that night. We were met at the depot by some hotel runners and as there was but one hotel that amounted to much, we were taken in charge and bundled up town, a distance of about half a mile. We were tired, and the town was asleep, so we proceeded to get in the same condition as soon as possible.

Next morning we were up early and on our tour



of inspection, and when we left were satisfied with the results of our visit.

The town was founded October 22nd, 1575, and has at the present time a population of some 38,000. About 30,000 of them are directly or indirectly interested in drawn work, for which the town is famous. How this place came to be a center for linen work I have not learned, for they do not manufacture it, but the amount that is sold of this beautiful work in the city, and the still greater amount shipped out of it, is wonderful. All that is sold in the town for drawn work is not made there, but by machinery elsewhere, and if you care to watch the native at the station selling to the passengers as the train stops for a few minutes, you can learn some of the tricks of the trade.

The venders are not allowed on the platform, but stand in a row alongside a low platform fence. The passengers walk along the platform and examine the work. A beautiful piece of really good work is held out in front of a number of other pieces. The customer examines it and inquires the price. The purchaser knows that about twice the worth of the article is going to be asked, and thereupon offers less than half. The vender knows just as well that only one-half of what is asked is going to be offered so there you are, but here is what very often happens. After the price is offered by the would-be buyer, the man with the goods talks quite a little showing its beauty, and from a number of other pieces substitutes one looking almost like the piece under considera-

tion, and after some more bargaining, ends by letting it go for what he can get for it. The passenger hurries to catch the train and when Mrs. Jones is showing Mrs. Brown her lovely purchase and how cheap she got it, she will have a machine made thing of beauty and will come to the conclusion that the peddler was not such a fool as he looked. This only goes to prove that the work is worth imitating, for from what I can learn some of the most beautiful work of this kind is made in Calientas. There are schools and convents in the town, devoted to teaching the art, and in these and some reputable stores and semi-public families, one may freely purchase, knowing that what they buy is what it is represented to be.

I was first informed of all the above, and verified it afterwards.

The hot springs that gave the city its name, are located across the railway track. A street car runs to the entrance. At the office you arrange about the temperature of bath you desire and you are led up a little incline and around the corner where you are shown your number, you step inside and lock the door, and find yourself in a fair sized room, in which is a lounge. At the far end is a square bath about five feet by eight, lined with tile on the sides and bottom. The water is reached by a few steps and is about knee deep or more. It remains that way as the overflow is regulated, and the amount of water flowing in keeps it at the same temperature all the time. You are supplied with towels and a piece of soap and a little loose hemp to wrap it in and scrub with if you so de-

sire. The water is supposed to have curative qualities, and whatever is the matter with you, that's what it is good for.

After bathing you wrap yourself up in the bathrobe and rest on the lounge, or dress as you elect. but in any case the baths are good and refreshing.

The water of all degrees of heat that flow from the springs, whether used for bathing or not, finds its way into a ditch, and flows to the town. Close to the railway track two bath houses are erected, one on either side of the road and the men take their tub or plunge in one place and the women in the other, free of charge. They used to bathe in the open and do their washing at the same time, but a wash place back of the bath houses affords more seclusion if they wish to wash and wait for the drying.

The city itself is best seen by walking from the depot about half a mile up a street of one-story buildings, with occasional two story business houses or hotels on the corner. You then arrive at the main square. On the left is the governor's palace, state house and casa municipal or city hall. They are old-looking, but in good repair. The portales present quite a pretty picture with clothing of all descriptions hung up or piled up for sale.

The plaza is large and has many trees and flowers. In its center is a tall monument, that used to have a statue of Ferdinand VII, but in one of their three-for-a-quarter wars Ferde was upset and they never mustered sufficient energy to set him up again, so they just

use the monument for putting tablets on, telling of past events that they don't want to forget.

The market is very good and presents a busy appearance, and the overflow tradespeople sit on the sidewalk and sell all sorts of staples from live chickens to corn, wherewith to feed them.

The churches are well represented, but I did not find a single one in all the town that laid claim to one of the most important in Mexico, still they swell up with pride when they point to the parish church with its paintings by Andreas Lopez in 1797, and the Adoration of the Magi by Jose de Alzibar in 1775, and the church of the Encino boasts the best paintings of the Stations of the Cross in Mexico, so that is going some.

We remained two days and acquired a knowledge of its history and about two hundred dollars worth of drawn work.

Oh, there is one thing in Aguas Calientas that is claimed to be the best in Mexico and that is its cats. The hotel where we stayed is conducted by a lady and she leads a dogs life watching her feline pets. They are Angoras and for one particular cat she has been offered, and refused, three thousand dollars in gold. If she refuses that for one cat's life what must she ask for the other eight. But the above are facts. She has her cats insured and they have taken first prize wherever they have competed, and as she said herself, while she is doing such a business as that there is no fear of her going to the dogs, still I am

inclined to the belief that what she charges her guests helps to buy some cat meat also.

Aguas Calientes in the more practical affairs of life is noted for its woolen mills, and one of the largest smelting plants in the country. The Mexican Central has its workshops here, employing a large force of men, so that needles and hot water are not the only source of revenue. The climatic and sanitary conditions of the place caused the railway people to erect their general hospital near the station at a cost of some \$200,000.

Had we remained a few days longer we would have been in the midst of the fiesta de San Marcos for which the town was preparing, but two days' time was all we could spare and so at 7 a. m. the second day of our visit we took the train and settled down to enjoy the scenery on our homeward trip.

A run of about three hours and we are at Zacatecas, after struggling up hill for the last hour of the trip, but the climbing and zig-zagging around was worth the while for the approach is one of the sights that will linger in memory. The town itself is in a gulch and can be seen and lost many times before arriving at the station. Attention is called to it by the guide book as being away up an immense gulch and where the flat top houses, the domes and towers seem to have slidden down from both the hills till it is filled half way up on the other side, and straggling out the mouth of it down to the plain where Guadalupe is. The place itself is about the last on earth a person would expect to find a town. The

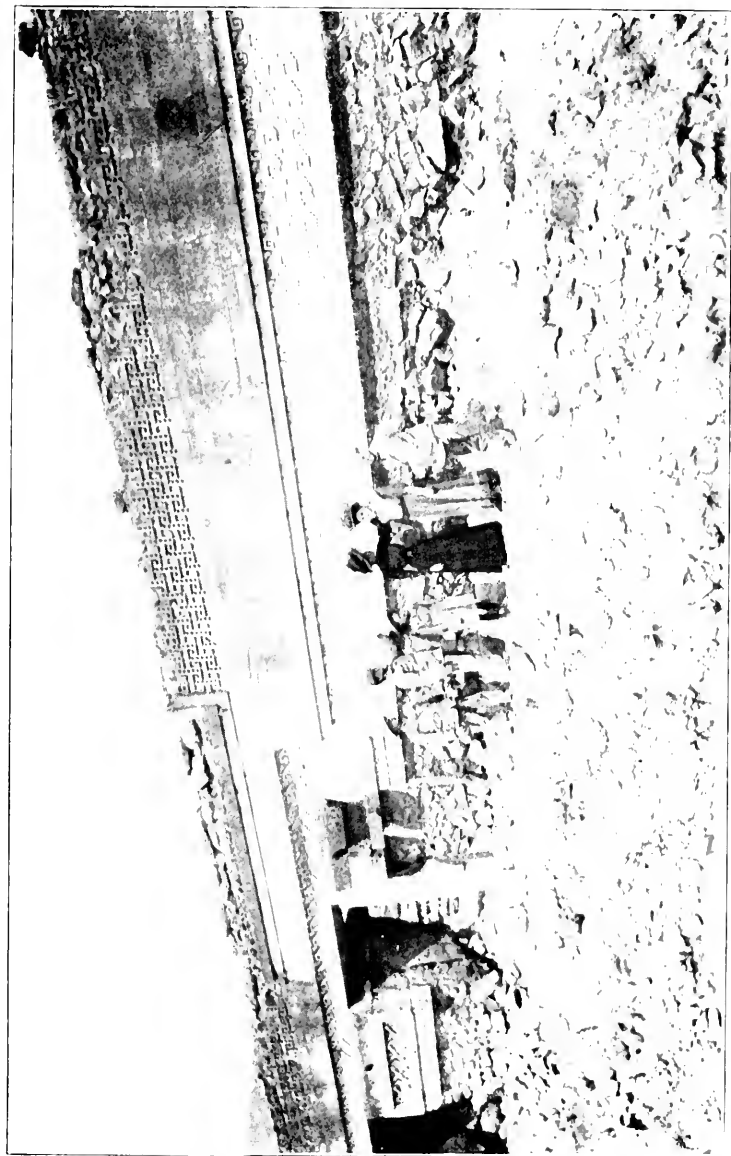
country around about it is not a thing of beauty, being desert or mountain and one would imagine the thing impossible at first glance, but there it is and after getting a few glimpses of it here and there as we approach, the beauty of it all becomes more and more impressed on the mind and we tried to keep it in view every moment of the journey upward.

When the train stops at the station the best view is gone and only in the distance can be seen a portion of what is perhaps the greatest mining center in all Mexico. Close to the station and scattering around are little adobe places mostly walls and apparently deserted. A little level country and then the rising ground for a mile or so and back and beyond are the mountains.

The town has been the scene of mining since 1546 and statistics give its output since that time at \$700,000,000 and even now its annual yield in silver is about \$3,000,000. It has a population of 50,000 and seems to be a little world all to itself, and its elevation of 8,000 feet is about as high as we reached in any of the cities of Mexico.

The natives were around the platform with baskets and curios, and you have come to the conclusion that you would like your baggage set down and spend a few days, when away you go down and around through soil almost blood red and cactus like gardens. Gradually the mountains fade away and cactus seems to take possession of the whole earth.

We passed through much uninteresting country and finally useful vegetation began to show, and the



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possibility of raising a sheep or cow becomes encouraging, and the nearer we got to Torreon the more promising became the land, the territory surrounding this and Gomez Palacio is said to be the center of the cotton industry.

Gomez Palacio is about three miles nearer home, and where they manufacture soap, I think largely for export. Here also are oil and cotton mills. Population about 8,000. We lost the daylight and the scenery at the last named station.

When we awoke the next morning we were getting close to Chihuahua, which we get a glimpse of as the train passes between the station and the shops. The town itself is not close to the track, but there are houses and people enough around to give one that impression.

Chihuahua is the capital of that state and has a population of some 40,000 and is noted among other things for the large number of small dogs it raises. It has for years been the chief distributing point for northern Mexico and on that account alone is becoming largely Americanized. The twenty minutes we stopped did not give us a chance to get acquainted with the people to any large extent, nor even to buy a dog, although they were in evidence. The conductor informed us that the breed was local, but the price and fame national, and that each dog was guaranteed to take a bite out of the leg of a hobo as large as itself. We weren't bit because we didn't buy.

The country north to Juarez has a great future

for stock raising, so some one told us, but the mining industry is in the lead up to the present.

The native, as we found him after leaving Chihuahua, is not a thing of beauty as compared with the southern product and the nearer the approach to Juarez the more desirous we were of crossing the bridge and again tread the streets of El Paso and hear some one ask us "what are you going to have."

We were met down the road by the custom officers, and our hand baggage inspected and in a short time after our arrival had our other effects looked over at the custom house, and were given a clean bill of health as it were.

All that we purchased in Mexico had been declared and we found no trouble. We had purchased pretty close to the limit, but were willing to pay duty if necessary, and I am of the opinion that by putting all your purchases where they can be seen quickly, without attempting to hide anything, you get better results and quicker freedom.

It was about five o'clock when we changed cars at Juarez for El Paso, crossed the bridge and were again in the United States and once more found an American hotel and the English language.

With our arrival at El Paso, the trip to Mexico ends. We traveled from Juarez in Chihuahua to Palenque in Chiapas, or from the most northern state to the most southern and practically through the center of the country. We have seen its mountains and its valleys, its deserts and its forest, its lakes and rivers, land so poor that it refused to nourish even the

pulque plant and land that blooms like a garden of Eden. We have seen its people ignorant and poor and its people refined and wealthy. Its customs good, bad and indifferent. We have been through a country that is adapted for the race that inhabit it, and the foreigner with capital. A country whose past is a mystery, its present a revelation, and its future a wonderful possibility.

We have made observations of their industrial system, and the so-called peonage that we had heard so much of, and found much untruth and painful exaggeration concerning it. We have read and heard of the brutal treatment of the contract laborer on the plantation and from our personal observations we are pleased to state that these abuses exist largely in the imagination of some romancers.

A laborer on a plantation will hire himself for a given period or by the day. If for a stated time and compensation he is bound by that contract only when he has been paid a certain sum in advance. This sum he will spend to provide for his family or hide it away before he begins work for he looks upon the advance money as a kind of a bargain closing, and considers himself so many days labor indebted to his employer, and cannot quit until he has liquidated his indebtedness. Indeed if he should attempt to do so he can be arrested and brought before the Jefe Politico, who will see to it that the agreement is fulfilled.

In the interior when a planter requires more help, I have known of them sending their superintendent or native overseer to fiestas, where the laborers may be

celebrating, engage as many as is desired or as many as can be had, and should it happen that they are employed by another and in debt, they must procure the necessary amount from the new employer and pay that debt before they can leave their present position.

The remuneration for labor in Mexico is small, but the wants are few and when the laborer feels the necessity of the white man's wants, both labor and its products will command a better price.

The government of the country has been criticised by writers, but I believe that the present condition of affairs reflects great credit on its law makers.

The personal safety of the traveling public is as great as that of any other country that I know of, and property rights as firmly established as they are in the United States.

This satisfactory condition of affairs has been brought about largely and maintained by that greatest of all Mexicans, President Porfirio Diaz and to him and his country we are indebted for a delightful two months' outing, the mosquitos notwithstanding.





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